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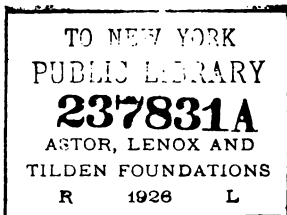
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LETTER
TO
THE LORD GLENELG,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES;
CONTAINING
A REPORT,
FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATION,
ON
THE WORKING OF THE NEW SYSTEM
IN THE
BRITISH WEST INDIA COLONIES.


BY
JOHN INNES.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMAN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1835.



THE following Letter was not written for publication. A few copies were printed for persons officially and otherwise connected with the colonies, who alone can introduce, and give effect to, the measures recommended as indispensable to the eventual success of the great experiment of free labour. It has, however, been urged on me, by those in whose judgment I have confidence, that good may result from its more extended circulation, and therefore it is submitted to the public.



CONTENTS.

	Page
BRITISH GUIANA	3
BARBADOES	38
TRINIDAD	42
ST. VINCENT	47
GRENADA	51
ST. LUCIA	53
ANTIGUA	56
ST. KITT'S	73
NEVIS	78
DOMINICA.....	79
JAMAICA	81

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS	108
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A LETTER,

ETC.

MY LORD,

Having often, during my long intercourse with the West Indies, experienced inconvenience from never having been in those colonies, I, in September last, determined to avail myself of that peculiarly-interesting period to visit them. I waited on Mr. Spring Rice, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, to ascertain whether there were any points on which his Majesty's government desired information, as I would gladly take any reasonable trouble to make myself useful at such a critical period. He entered on many matters on which government desired information ; and, that no facility that he could afford should be wanting, he gave me letters to all the Governors. I have performed my intended tour, and now beg to lay my observations before you. I shall be as brief as may be consistent with perspicuity.

BRITISH GUIANA.

I arrived at George Town (the capital of British Guiana) on the 4th December, 1834. I lost no time

in questioning intelligent persons on the points on which I desired to be informed. To my great surprise I found these parties entertaining opinions widely at variance, even on matters respecting which I thought there was not room for a shade of difference among persons residing in the same colony. In a few days, however, I was at no loss to account for what at first appeared inexplicable. I soon found that in British Guiana there was the greatest possible diversity of soil and climate, and that persons were so much occupied that they did not generally trouble themselves about districts to which business did not carry them, and therefore each spoke in reference to his own quarter. In proof of the difference of soil and climate, it will be sufficient to mention that on the East or Courantyne coast of Berbice, in a line of nearly fifty miles, there are only six sugar-estates, two cotton-estates, and a few cattle-farms; the rest is bush, presenting an appearance of desolation, with roads almost impassable. There is, however, a constant breeze, that renders the climate healthy and delightful. On the West or Arabian coast of Essequibo the sugar-estates are close to each other, and the roads good,—a complete contrast to the opposite extremity of the colony; and although the climate of the Arabian coast is not unhealthy, it differs from that of the Courantyne coast. In short, this noble colony, or, as it has been appropriately termed, “magnificent province,” of British Guiana, presents such variety,

that to be understood, it is necessary, in making remarks, that the peculiarities of the district spoken of should be adverted to.

I have visited nearly the whole colony, and have resided in the houses of planters and managers, and sought information from every person I thought qualified to impart it; I trust, therefore, it will not be considered presumptuous in me to say, that I ought to be able to give a tolerably accurate account of the state of British Guiana.

Previously to the 1st of August (1834) there was a Committee of Planters appointed to draw up a Table of the work usually performed in one day by the negroes, on sugar, coffee, and cotton, estates. That table I subjoin*. As after the first of August

- * *SCALES of Task-Work for effective Prædial Apprenticed Labourers in the colony of BRITISH GUIANA, as laid down by the Undersigned, appointed as a COMMITTEE for that purpose, by His Excellency SIR JAMES CARMICHAEL SMYTH, Governor and Commander-in-chief, &c. &c. in and over the said Colony and its Dependencies.*

CANE CULTIVATION.

<i>Description of Work.</i>	<i>Work now performed in 9 hours.</i>	<i>Work to be performed in 7½ hours.</i>
Digging new navigable canals, 12 ft. wide and 5 ft. deep, and throwing the ground on both sides	600 cubic feet	500 cubic feet
Throwing back a 6-foot parapet from the above, and levelling the ground	72 feet in length	60 feet in length
Digging new punt trenches as above, when the ground is all thrown on one side	480 cubic feet	400 cubic feet
Throwing back 6-feet parapets from above	48 feet in length	40 feet in length
Digging new small drains 2 x 2, land cleared	18 roeds	15 roeds
Throwing out small drains one shovel deep	50 roeds	42 roeds
Holling or banking land, 2½ x 2½	36 roeds	30 roeds
Shovel ploughing new-holed land, a shovel deep, and rounding beds ..	72 roeds	60 roeds
Hoe ploughing and planting one row of the above with two rows of		

the apprentices could only be called on to work seven hours and a half per day, or forty-five hours

<i>Description of Work.</i>	<i>Work now performed in 9 hours.</i>	<i>Work to be performed in 7½ hours.</i>
plants, the plants being on the parapets	60 roeds	50 roeds
Weeding, moulding, and supplying plant canes, first time, in holed land	90 roeds of 1 row	75 roeds
Weeding and moulding plant canes second time	100 roeds	86 roeds
Weeding and moulding ratoons	120 roeds	100 roeds
Weeding and trashing canes	120 roeds	100 roeds
Cutting and carrying canes, where the carriage does not exceed 18 roeds	2 labourers to load a punt 28 x 7½, and 3 ft. deep, 600 cubic feet	500 cubic feet
Ditto ditto, for one hoghead of sugar per diem	11 labourers	18 labourers
Belleving and tying trash Ratoons, }	120 roeds	100 roeds
Supplying only first time	120 roeds	100 roeds
Relieving and supplying at same time	60 roeds	50 roeds
Shovel ploughing a space between (2 feet wide) cane rows	60 roeds	50 roeds
Drilling 2 feet wide, one shovel deep	36 roeds	30 roeds
PLANTAIN CULTIVATION.		
Weeding and trimming plantain walks	5 labourers to 1 acre	6 labourers to 1 acre
Digging plantain suckers	200 each labourer	180 each labourer
Ditto holes for ditto, 15 inches square	120 ditto	100 ditto
Planting ditto, suckers at hand	150 ditto	125 ditto
CUTTING FIRE-WOOD, and cord- ing do., carriage not over 20 roeds	128 cubic feet, or 8 feet x 4	107 cubic feet, or 6 feet 8 inches x 4
COFFEE CULTIVATION.		
Digging holes 18 inches square for coffee plants	120 each labourer	100 each labourer
Planting coffee in the above, the plants being on the spot	100 ditto	85 ditto
Weeding coffee, and pulling off water- sprouts and vines from the trees	5 labourers to 1 acre	6 labourers to 1 acre
It is impossible to fix any scale of task-work for picking coffee, as the quantity to be picked by each individual must entirely depend upon the quantity of ripe fruit on the trees	—	—
Trimming coffee-trees after crop, and cutlassing vines on the trees	4 labourers to 1 acre	5 labourers to 1 acre
Assorting first-quality coffee, after be- ing stamped, winnowed, and sifted	150 lbs.	120 lbs.
Inferior and drift coffee	75 lbs.	60 lbs.
Cutting bunches of plantains, and car- rying them in punts to the build- ings, provided the head carriage does not exceed 100 roeds	88 bunches to each labourer	65 bunches to each labourer
Trenching (the same as in sugar cul- tivation)	—	—

per week, instead of nine hours per day, or fifty-four hours per week, it takes off one-sixth, to exhibit the quantity of labour required after the 1st of August. Generally, or, I believe I may say, universally, the apprentices were informed that if they worked according to the table, more would not be required of them, and that they might either work nine hours per day for five days in the week, taking Saturday to themselves, or seven hours and a half daily for six days in the week. Whatever time was asked for deliberation was readily granted to them. The Governor, however, in his instructions

COTTON CULTIVATION.		
<i>Description of Work.</i>	<i>Work now performed in 9 hours.</i>	<i>Work to be performed in 7½ hours.</i>
Planting cotton, supposing the land to be prepared.....	6 labourers, 3 acres	7 labourers, 3 acres
Pruning cotton.....	6 ditto ditto	7 ditto ditto
Weeding, after pruning	6 ditto to 1 acre	7 ditto to 1 acre
Ditto after crop, or other weeding ..	5 ditto ditto	6 ditto ditto
No general system of task-work can be applied to picking cotton, as it must depend on the character of the crop	—	—
Ginning by manual labour.....	50 lbs. each labourer	40 lbs. each labourer
Cleaning cotton after ginning	60 lbs. ditto	50 lbs. ditto
Baling with machine	7 bales to 4 labourers	6 bales to 4 labourers
Trenching (same as on sugar estates)	—	—
WOOD CUTTING — SQUARING TIMBER.		
Felling trees and squaring them for saw logs	25 cubic feet	21 cubic feet
Ditto ditto for framing timber	18 ditto	15 ditto
Making wallaba shingles, and carrying them to a water-carriage	200 each labourer	175 to each labourer
Making staves and heading, and carrying them as above	100 ditto	87 ditto
Cutting and cording hardwood for fuel	6 labourers to 4 cords	6 labourers to 3 cords
<i>N. B.</i> —The Roed mentioned in the foregoing Tariff, and made use of in Guiana, is the Rhynland roed—equal to 12 feet 4 inches, nearly.		

to the Special Justices of the Peace, strongly recommended the apprentices to work nine hours per day for five days, that they might have an entire day weekly to themselves; but in Demerara and Essequibo they nearly all made choice of seven hours and a half daily, as being what they called the "King's law." In the Berbice district the result was different: the majority were in favour of having Saturday to themselves. I was curious to know how the Saturday was spent by these parties. I inquired in every quarter, and found, as might be expected, that on some plantations they cultivated their own grounds; on some, such as were required worked for hire; in two instances they had worked for hire on neighbouring estates; in many cases they spent the day in absolute idleness. The most important fact, however, is, that on the whole the number working on Saturday has greatly diminished. I visited on the Saturday one estate, with upwards of three hundred apprentices, where they began by being very industrious: on the Saturday I visited it only twelve had gone to their grounds; the rest, although the day was particularly fine, remained in their houses idle.

The next inquiry naturally was, "are the apprenticed labourers, generally, willing to work extra for hire, and what wages are usually allowed?" To make the reply intelligible it is necessary to explain, that some sugar-estates are full-handed, and require no extra labour, except when grinding, and then

only in the boiling-house and about the works. On such estates I have heard no complaint of difficulty in obtaining the requisite extra labour. Sugar-estates under-handed, or with only sufficient strength, have, generally, no difficulty in obtaining extra labour for the boiling-house, whilst they can get no other extra labour. Other estates, more fortunate, obtain more extra labour, but such extra labour cannot be relied on, the apprentices being extremely capricious. Coffee-estates seldom require extra labour, except during crop time, and there has been only one crop since the 1st of August. Some planters found the negroes willing to work extra, whilst others had to submit to the loss of part of their crops, from their inability to procure extra labour. Cotton-estates, like coffee, want extra labour only during the crop-season. As far as I have been able to learn, this extra labour has been obtained, although at great expense. Knowing the exigency, the apprentices exacted high wages. It was not unusual for able-bodied negroes to earn extra on coffee and cotton estates $f4\frac{1}{2}$ (guilders)* per week, and some even much more.

On sugar-estates the pay for extra labour varies according to circumstances. On estates adjoining each other I have found a difference of nearly 50 per cent., one being more dependent on extra labour than the other. Some estates pay for field-labour

* According to the present rate of exchange, 14 guilders are equal to one pound sterling.

two stivers* per hour, whilst other estates pay three, and even more. The most uniform system of wages exists in the large and fertile island Wackanaam (in the mouth of the Essequibo river), where, I believe with only one exception, it was agreed between the planters and apprenticed labourers that the latter should work precisely the same as before the 1st of August, and that they should be paid for extra time by a scale agreed on. This arrangement has been acted on ever since the 1st of August. That you may see the rate of wages, &c. I give a copy† of one of the agreements, signed

* There are 20 stivers to the guilder, and 16 pennings to the stiver.

† “ Contract between the representatives of Plantation ———, as employers, and the apprenticed labourers thereto attached, for the extra portion of their time, according to the fifth chapter of the Ordinance for the Government and Regulation of Apprenticed Labourers :—

1. The said apprenticed labourers engage to add their own proportion of one hour and a half daily to the seven and a half hours legally due to their employer, and perform their former full day's work in manner as will be required by the plantation, either in the field, at the manufacturing work, the various departments, as watchmen or otherwise, in the same manner they have heretofore done during the week.
2. The strong or first-class labourers (meaning those doing a full day's task of nine hours) to have *one* guilder each for the week's extra labour. The second-class labourers (meaning those doing one-fourth less work than the first class) to be rated at *one* bit (or five stivers) less. The third-class labourers (meaning those doing only half a day's task) to have one bit less than the second class, or half the wages of the full labourer. Children and the weak, constituting the

by the attorney of the planter, and four of the apprentices for themselves and on behalf of the rest, and witnessed by the stipendiary magistrate. I have

fourth class, to have each one bit per week when employed at extra labour. The drivers (or superintendents of the labourers) to have a rate of *two* bits more for head drivers, and *one* bit more for inferior drivers, above the wages of the first class. All sick, absent, or blank days, to be deducted from these weekly wages. Domestics, boatmen, stock-minders, and watchmen, to remain as directed by the first section of the fourth chapter of the Ordinance.

3. The day's-field task shall be regulated as formerly:—four turns (or paths) across the field, in single row, whether in those of thirty-four roeds from punt-trench to punt-trench, or in the narrower fields of only twenty-six roeds broad. And for every fresh breadth or path above these prescribed *four* turns, an additional bit above the weekly guilder shall be allowed the apprenticed labourer. Should, however, still any difference arise as to the proper construction of the terms, “a full day's work,” in that case the Tariff scale of labour, published by order of His Excellency the Governor, shall be resorted to for final decision.
4. In full crop-time, when the manufacturing works will probably commence at five o'clock in the morning, and, as casualties require, continue to eight o'clock in the evening, all the first-class labourers employed in and about the said works, or the punts, are to be entitled to one bit each day for extra labour, instead of the weekly guilder. Those employed at cutting and carrying canes in the field, to share, likewise, one bit each per day, instead of the weekly guilder, whenever thirty-six of them, as heretofore, cut and fill sixteen of the present size punts daily.
5. Payments for such extra labour now here contracted, to be paid on the first day of each month; and this contract to continue in force for only twelve calendar months from this day.
6. As long as the here-contracting apprenticed labourers strictly perform their engagement now entered into, their employers

not heard of dissatisfaction on either side. Under the agreement referred to, the estate in question has had to pay *f*896 monthly for extra labour.

Having ascertained the position of the planters respecting extra labour from the apprentices, I

engage to continue to them those indulgences and advantages which they otherwise are legally not entitled to: such as—a moderate proportion of provision-ground, privilege to keep and raise poultry on the plantation, the customary dram of rum, tobacco, sugar, holiday pork, and the like.

7. Should, at any time, Plantation ——— not require the extra labour now contracted for, then, and in that case, three days' previous notice is to be given to the people, in order that they may dispose of such spare time otherwise.
8. The boilermen preferring to be rated in the manner they have since a couple of weeks been allowed, namely—for every hogshead of sugar made (of forty truss) beyond *two* hogsheads per day, wages at the rate of two guilders to be divided amongst them at the end of the week. This rate is substituted instead of the one bit per diem.—Also the whole gang of labourers preferring to receive their wages at the termination of each fortnight or half-monthly, such is consented to.

Plantation ———,
31st August, 1834.

(Signed) { A. B. Attorney.
C. D. Manager.

The following four apprenticed labourers being deputed by the whole gang, for signature and acceptance of the above contract,

Yankey, × his mark.
Toney, × his mark.
Dina, × her mark.
Anna Marie, × her mark.

I certify that I have seen the above parties sign this agreement, after it had been duly read over and explained to them.

(Signed) GEORGE KELLOCK,
Chairman, District F——.

naturally inquired into the assistance they derived in the way of labour from those declared free, under the 3d section of the Abolition Act, through their having been in Great Britain.* The result of my inquiries was most disappointing. In the whole of British Guiana, I could only hear of one woman who continued to labour in the field on a sugar estate, and her so continuing may be accounted for by the circumstance that her daughter is maid to the lady of the planter, resident in town, and that it was intimated to her that if she once left the estate she must not appear on it again; it being conceived that her so appearing might excite dissatisfaction among the apprentices. On the same estate there is a man, a native of one of the islands, whom his master made free about eight years ago,

* There appears to me to be an omission in the Abolition Act, in not providing full compensation to planters who had negroes made free under this clause. They were declared free from the passing of the Act in August, 1833, and they were enabled to claim and obtain their freedom two months thereafter. They ought at such time to have been appraised at their full value, and the planter paid accordingly. I trust the omission will be supplied, as there can be no reason why the possessors of such negroes should have been deprived of them without full compensation. I believe I am correct in saying that in the majority of cases in British Guiana, these negroes were not in Europe with their last masters, who, therefore, could have derived no benefit from their services there. I will not pretend to say whether the Commissioners of Compensation have power to award such compensation; it certainly does not appear that their doing so was contemplated by the act, or provision would have been made for the appraisement at the only time it could satisfactorily take place, namely, when the masters were deprived of the negroes in question.

and who continues to labour in the field: he also has a tie to the estate. These are the only instances the most diligent inquiry brought to my knowledge, of persons made free, from whatever cause, continuing to work in the field on sugar cultivation. There are many instances of their continuing to work on sugar-estates at other than field-labour. This great repugnance to the field I do not altogether ascribe to the severity of the work. The tradesmen and domestics have long been considered the aristocracy of the blacks, and when any of that class have misbehaved, it has been usual to threaten to send them to the field, thereby marking the field-labour as degrading. There are many instances of free negroes remaining on coffee-estates, but the majority of free negroes have resorted to George Town and New Amsterdam, where they do not in many cases earn one-half of what would be readily paid them on estates.

As I wish at one view to bring under your Lordship's notice the situation of the planter in reference to labour, this appears to be the proper place to state, that in British Guiana the number of children made free under the Abolition Act, is 9,873, and that I am not acquainted with a solitary instance of the apprenticing of any of these children under the said Act. The Governor, in the instructions he issued to the Special Justices of the Peace on the 1st of August, strongly discountenanced such apprenticeships, and it appears that his advice has been

universally followed. I do not propose to offer any opinion, far less to enter into a discussion, on the policy of the recommendation ; I merely state the fact that 9,873 children are now being brought up without the slightest prospect of any one of them becoming field-labourers. Previously to the 1st of August, children of such tender years as those alluded to were placed during the hours of labour in what is called the Creole House, of which there is one on each estate, and superintended by a few nurses, thereby leaving the mothers to join in the general work of the estate. When the mothers are free, each will naturally attend to her own children, and thereby be deprived of the power, even if the inclination existed, of working in the field. It is thus obvious that supposing (a supposition the realization of which is, however, too extravagant to be entertained by any man of common experience) that the general gangs of the estates should be disposed to work after the apprenticeship, the abstraction of the field-labour of so many women and young persons would prevent the sugar-planter from carrying on the business of his estate, except on a very contracted scale. Having his works, buildings, &c. adapted to extended cultivation, it is clear that the sugar raised on a contracted scale would be at a greatly enhanced cost.

This gives rise to the question, can the planter afford to cultivate sugar under such a disadvantage ? This question is answered by a startling fact,—one

for which, I confess, I was not prepared, yet to which investigation compels me to assent,—namely, that, with all the advantages of British Guiana, sugar-cultivation, on the aggregate, has been a decidedly losing business. There are some splendid exceptions, as in mining, where almost princely fortunes have been realized, and others have been moderately successful, but taking the whole colony, the capital sunk has not yielded an adequate return. My impressions, I say, were different; but after taking each estate, and obtaining extensive information from parties conversant with details, the balance against adequate return was so great, as to leave the question free from doubt.* If, then, the aggregate of sugar-cultivation has not been profitable whilst planters had the command of labourers, it is manifest that, when deprived of that command, British Guiana must cease to be a great sugar colony. This is the vital point which I desire to press, not only on your Lordship's consideration, and that of the government generally, but also on the consideration of all who wish success to the gigantic experiment of free labour. If it fail, it is frightful to contemplate the vast extension there will be of foreign slavery: whereas, if it succeed,

* It will be said that the outlay in settling estates having taken place, the cultivation will be continued whilst the income exceeds the annual expenses, not including interest on outlay. True: but if the revenue leaves nothing for interest, planters in debt must be ruined, and an end put to the extension of sugar-cultivation, or to its preservation as now existing.

it must lead to the eventual extirpation of slavery all over the world. When so much is at issue, I trust government will encourage and aid such measures as may ensure success, without any nice calculation of the pecuniary outlay. Under the conviction that nothing will be wanting on your Lordship's part, I shall proceed to lay before you such further information on the state of British Guiana as I have been able to collect, and then, what is more important, the opinions of practical men on the proper measures for ensuring labour, when deprived of the services of many of the present labourers.

The Abolition Act, in giving freedom to all children under six years of age, clearly contemplated their education and religious instruction; for in the thirteenth clause it is expressly provided, that in the event of any of these children being apprenticed, the "employer is to allow reasonable time and opportunity for the education and religious instruction of such child." The employer is not required to instruct; he is only to allow "reasonable time and opportunity." The parents cannot be expected to incur the expense, for it is their inability to support the child that is the cause of its apprenticeship, and therefore there can be no doubt but that the legislature intended that the education and religious instruction should be at the charge of government. Yet nothing has been done to fulfil this benevolent intention: I trust it will be not much longer delayed.

I am sorry to say, that I find the negroes much less advanced in civilization than I had anticipated. Some planters have for years past gone to considerable expense in establishing schools on their estates, but they bear a very small proportion to the whole, and I cannot say that, where the schools have existed, much improvement is visible. The attendance is necessarily voluntary, there being no law to authorize compulsion, and therefore steady application is not to be expected. I have had a case mentioned to me, where at the commencement of a school, about eighty young persons attended, and in a few weeks the number was reduced to eight or ten. It is obvious that such a system of instruction is defective, and that not a day ought to be lost in establishing a general system, to which it shall be compulsory on persons of a certain age to conform. Until a community can be made to understand their relative duties as children, husbands and wives, and parents, it is vain to expect that they will make any sacrifices to perform their obligations in such capacities: consequently, when free, they can never be kept together. I will not say that there is not to be found in British Guiana a solitary instance among the apprentices of these duties being understood and properly appreciated; but the mass of the negro population are quite devoid of such knowledge. In England, it is thought that marriage amongst the negroes is a proof of progress in religious knowledge. I regret to say that the in-

ference is erroneous as respects this colony. On a few estates I found that those who were married looked down on and declined to associate with persons who lived together without the marriage ceremony. This, however, I am afraid is rather to be ascribed to a temporary fashion introduced by some of the principal negroes, than to any just sense of moral obligation, for I found in almost every quarter that the married were not better conducted than others. In some parts there are many married, through the planters encouraging it by presents; whereas, in other districts, very few marry, it being in such places the fashion to expend from forty to fifty joes* on the wedding feast,—a sum very few are possessed of; the fact is, that every man has many wives or women (the term wife is not confined to those who are married) as he can afford to keep. Some of the head people have half a dozen.

On some estates there are many apprentices that can read, and some that can also write; these, however, are exceptions; the great majority can do neither. It would be much more gratifying to me to have to report otherwise, but I feel that without the real state of things being known effectual remedies cannot be applied, and therefore I should be doing great injustice to the colonists themselves, who have evinced the utmost anxiety to go the full

* A joe is twenty-two guilders.

extent of their means to promote the civilization of the negroes, if I were to withhold facts of so much importance. The present means of instruction are altogether inadequate. The colonists have gone to a very heavy expense in building churches and providing for the clergymen, but in some districts the deficiency is lamentable : for instance, on the Courantyne coast, comprehending a district of fifty miles, there is not a single church ; and in other parts of the Berbice district the planters have to give up part of their buildings for occasional service. One Sunday, I went to attend service in a boiling-house : on arriving I found that there could be no service that day, the boiling-house being otherwise occupied, and no place had been provided in the district, which was a populous one. The planters are most anxious that this state of things should be put an end to, and some of them have offered to contribute liberally, according to their means ; but without the aid of government I fear little can be accomplished. When government recommended that Demerara and Essequibo should be divided into parishes, and churches built, there was an intimation from the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, as I have been informed by Members of the Court of Policy, that when the colonists had performed their part, government would step forward with pecuniary assistance to extend the means of religious instruction ; government has not, however, as yet, contributed one shilling, but I trust there

will be no longer delay in doing what is requisite on this vital point.

In George Town and New Amsterdam the apprentices do not appear without being decently clothed, except in some quarters where workmen reside, and there I have seen children as old as seven or eight years in a state of nudity. In the country it is only domestics and head people that are clothed. The children to a certain age go naked, and the great mass of the working people are not more covered than decency absolutely requires. There is certain work on estates in which it is necessary to be in water up to the middle, and other work in which it is convenient to dispense with part of the dress. In such cases it would be absurd to insist on full clothing, but it obviously ought to be resumed so soon as that work is over, and retained at all other times. I am quite aware that the enforcement of such an order would be exceedingly unpopular with the apprentices, particularly with those advanced in years; yet, until such a regulation is made and enforced, there can be no proper notions of decency among the negroes; besides which, if the day of freedom be allowed to arrive before the apprentices are habituated to wear clothes, they will only have to work for one want, food, whereas, if accustomed to clothes, by not being permitted to appear without, there would be two wants to supply. Planters are compelled to furnish clothing, and I see no hardship in compelling the apprentices to wear it. In England, per-

sons are not suffered to walk the streets with such a lack of covering as to offend decency, and why should the negroes be permitted to exhibit themselves publicly in a state that is revolting to the feelings of all English females, and their children, who reside on estates? They cannot walk or look out of their houses, without having their feelings thus outraged. This very circumstance is sufficient to deter ladies from residing on estates, which of itself is an evil of no inconsiderable magnitude, for the apprentices are generally much benefited by the residence of ladies. They always find their mistress their friend. As an instance of such benefit, I may mention, that I spent a Sunday on an estate where the family consisted of the planter, his wife, and two grown up daughters, who had received the best education that England could afford. About half an hour after returning from church*, the gallery in front of the house was crowded by negroes of both sexes, I will not say decently dressed, for that would fall far short of a true description; many of them were dressed neatly and tastefully. In a few mi-

* I believe I ought to say chapel, for it was a place of worship erected by an individual planter, resident in England, on a large sugar-estate of his, at his sole expense, and he pays a clergyman of the Church of England to preach and to attend to the instruction of his apprentices. The chapel will contain about 600 persons; it was extremely well filled by blacks, decently dressed, who conducted themselves with great propriety. This gentleman does not confine the use of the chapel to his own people, others being permitted to attend.

nutes they were formed into three classes according to their progress. The lady of the house took the most advanced class, and the daughters the other two, giving them such instruction of a moral and religious nature as was suitable to their capacities.

In looking forward to the civilization of the negroes, care must be taken to remove from the system of conducting estates any practice having a tendency to impede or counteract it. In going into the houses of the negroes, and seeing their children, I occasionally found coloured children of the overseers. Each estate has two, three, or four overseers, according to its size. These overseers are generally young persons of respectable parents, and who have received a good education. They come from Great Britain, at salaries very little more than sufficient at first to keep them well supplied with clothing, and the planter allows the manager £600 annually for the board of each. They are in the rank of gentlemen, although unfortunately their employment cannot often remind them of it. It is clear that these persons cannot marry with propriety; they have not the means; even if they had somewhat larger salaries, such must be inadequate to send their children to England to be educated, and the means of education do not exist in the colony. It requires little knowledge of human nature to see that such persons will form connexions with the females of the estates, which must interfere with the

moral, religious, and domestic ties of the negroes*. I have conversed with many planters on this subject; they all admitted the evil, but were unable to supply a remedy. It certainly is a question of great difficulty, but it must be grappled with, as interfering with the advancement of civilization. I am not aware that all the duties performed by overseers may not be equally well performed by persons in a more humble station of life, provided those persons have been brought up to agriculture, and have been taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. Young married agricultural labourers, who have shown superior intelligence, and given proofs of steadiness, might be induced to go to British Guiana for moderate wages, with a cottage, a piece of land to cultivate, and provisions, until the land would yield sufficient for subsistence. With the patronage of the planter, the wife might earn a little money in various ways, if she has not children to attend to; and if she has children, she would not desire more education for them than she, or her husband, or the person who might have to teach the apprentices, would be able to impart. These children would soon support themselves in a way beneficial to the estate. The example of well-conducted

* In several colonies I have since visited, I have found planters who, rather than permit the demoralization arising out of this system, have reduced their number of whites, even though such deficiency subjected them to a penalty by law.

persons, such as I describe, could not fail to be productive of much good. The question will then be asked: Suppose the plan adopted as to overseers, where are managers to be found? I answer, that no person should be engaged as overseer who had not intelligence enough to warrant the belief that, with the usual experience, he would be competent to become manager*. My suggestions are not offered on the supposition that nothing better can be devised, but from an anxious desire that they may induce planters to do something to alter the existing abuse.

Your Lordship will expect me to say something about the general conduct of the apprentices in their new situation. In some remote districts, where they hear little of what is passing elsewhere, I found them doing all that the law exacts, without more trouble than might be expected from persons who knew that they could not be punished without giving their master considerable trouble, and putting him to expense. This knowledge induces those who are idly disposed to perform their tasks in a slovenly manner, but which is often passed over in preference to taking them before a magistrate. In more thickly-peopled districts, the apprentices on many estates are much more troublesome, and do not perform any thing like a fair share of labour.

* Some of the best managers in Antigua went to the island as ploughmen, and, after teaching the negroes to plough, became overseers, and rose to be managers.

I attended a meeting of a district court of magistrates, during the investigation of a charge brought by the manager of a coffee-estate against six able-bodied apprentices for not performing a sufficiency of work. He stated, that although he had only brought forward six as examples, he had equal reason to complain of the rest of the gang: that from the 12th of December (the complaint was heard on the 9th of January), these persons had done little more than half the usual quantity of work: he exhibited a table of the daily labour, to which an overseer was sworn; that table showed that on some days there were those who did little more than one-third the task allotted to them, whilst a free woman on the estate, who had three children to support and attend to, did the full quantity every day she worked, and was generally home between one and two o'clock, having gone out at seven o'clock. It was also proved, that before the 12th of December the gang had performed the task, by beginning at seven o'clock, and ending at twelve, one, and two o'clock, according to their industry. The manager thought that by remonstrance and patience he should bring them to the proper discharge of their duty, and therefore it was only at the end of nearly a month that he resorted to the magistrates. The culprits said, that the King's law*

* The apprentices attach so much importance to what they call the "King's law," that several cases have occurred of their not stopping work until the termination of seven hours and a half,

did not require them to work so much, and that it was only a law of the managers, which they were not bound to obey. This trial showed that the apprentices have very easy work on coffee-estates, (I say estates, because no higher task was exacted on other coffee-plantations,) and I can state, from my own observation, that apprentices on sugar-estates frequently finish their task by one o'clock. Indeed, I have seen in Wackenaam, (where I have already explained that the apprentices work the same as before the 1st of August, under an agreement for wages for extra time,) that the task is often performed by between one and two o'clock.

My attendance at magisterial courts to witness proceedings, gave me an opportunity of seeing the great inconvenience arising from the negroes being uneducated. Their common language is called "Creole Dutch." It is only those who have resided long among them that can understand them; the consequence is, that the stipendiary magistrates, who are mostly persons who have never been in the colony until their present appointments, are obliged to depend on interpreters. I heard one stipendiary magistrate, who had had the advantage of a previous residence in the colony, declare that he could scarcely understand one word. Without the assistance of the colonial special magistrates, the stipendiary ma-

although their task had been finished sooner. I must, however, add, that this respect for the "King's law" did not continue many days.

gistrates could not easily discharge the duties assigned to them. The colonial magistrates have to make great sacrifices of time. When they are planters or attornies, that time may possibly be spared, without any greater inconvenience than it is the duty of the leading men of a colony to submit to for the general good: but I was sorry to observe in some districts that managers held special commissions. It is utterly impossible for managers to discharge such duties without sacrificing the interests of the estates entrusted to them. The manager of a West India plantation is like the foreman of a large manufactory in England: it is his duty to be constantly on the spot, and to take care that every thing proceeds in order.

I am, however, allowing myself to wander from the subject on which I was writing, namely, the conduct of the apprentices. The instance I have given of the six apprentices before the District Court, will show that the number of cases before the magistrates and the number of punishments do not exhibit the true state of a district, inasmuch as extensive delinquencies are not always brought forward unless persevered in. In fact, the number of cases before magistrates depends much less on the conduct of the apprentices than the disposition of the managers. Many managers never take an apprentice before a magistrate until all other means have been tried in vain; whereas others bring all offences forward as soon as committed. There are of course

exceptions in so extensive a colony ; but I should say, speaking generally, that where a good understanding exists between the managers and apprentices, (and the want of such good understanding is probably as often attributable to one side as the other,) there is no great difficulty in obtaining the labour that the law exacts, although some of it is done with less care than formerly : but when the apprentices take a dislike to any of those placed over them, it is quite impossible to obtain the legal quantity of work. When I left the colony (1st March) many estates were suffering severely from loss of labour.

I have now brought before your Lordship, as fully in detail as appears to me to be necessary, the state of British Guiana*. As far as I can learn, it is the

* I have purposely avoided entering into the differences which unhappily exist between the Lieutenant-Governor and the Planters, (or rather the Colonists, the dissatisfaction extending to the whole community) but it is impossible for any person having the welfare of the colony and the good of his country at heart not to feel the deepest regret that at a period requiring the combined energy and forethought of all parties, the representative of his Majesty should be at variance with all those with whom, and through whom, he ought to act, for the general good. Abstractedly it may be unjust that the mere circumstance of a Governor's disagreeing with those under him should occasion his removal, yet politically it may be expedient, and even wise. When it is considered that a mighty change in the organization of the great mass of the population is at work, and cannot be brought to perfection without legislative enactments framed with the express object of meeting the new position of things, and of leading to a safe and happy completion, it is obvious that if the Governor has been so wanting in tact as to

prevailing opinion of planters that free negroes will work on coffee and cotton plantations, and therefore I deem it superfluous to direct attention to them. I claim your Lordship's special attention to the situation of the Sugar Planter. Behind the estates there is water, from which they are protected by dams*. When any of these dams give way, the repairs must be instantaneous, or the estate would be inundated. On every estate there are numerous trenches and a navigable canal, every thing being conveyed by water: all these require daily attention, to keep them in good order. When the sugar-canes are in a fit state, they must be cut, or great loss ensues. I might enter into more details, but these I presume are sufficient to show that cultivation cannot be carried on without a continuous command of labour. The first question is, will the planter be able to secure that continuous labour from the negroes after the apprenticeship? I believe it to be the unanimous, and, I am convinced, it is the honest, opinion of every person in British Guiana, who has the slightest acquaintance with the negro character, that it is perfectly chimerical to expect it. Indeed, all transactions now entered into are on the supposition that profitable sugar

offend all those who can assist him, he cannot be continued in office without sacrificing the interests of the colony, and hazarding the success of the great experiment.

* Many estates require dams to protect them from the sea in front, as well as from the water behind.

cultivation will cease with the apprenticeship. The next question is, what is to be done to save the sugar planter from ruin? I reply, begin, without the delay of a single day, the measures necessary to raise the negro character, that by the end of the apprenticeship the negroes may have a proper sense of the duties attaching to them in their various stations; so that every one may know that he is not (as they now suppose) to live for himself alone, but that he has duties either in the character of son, brother, husband, or parent, which can only be fulfilled by industry. By this means much labour may be obtained, although altogether inadequate to the wants of the planter, because, in addition to reasons already assigned, in a state of freedom many other employments will no doubt be found, as, in a colony to which nature has been so bountiful, it is to be expected that numerous objects of industry will spring up. The unavoidable deficiency can only be supplied by resorting to other quarters for labourers. To other quarters I would resort, on a limited scale, without delay, because it will take a considerable time to ascertain from experience, which alone can be relied on, what description of persons are best adapted to the wants of the planter.

I took very great pains to ascertain, with as much accuracy as the case admits of, the cost of labour to the sugar planter before the 1st. of August. I charged the allowances of food, clothing, &c. required by law, medical attendance, hospital ex-

penses, allowances of rum, sugar, and tobacco, usually made, although not enjoined by law, also the usual allowance of pork during the holidays,—in short, every outlay that could be considered as appertaining to labour,—and I found that the whole amounted to £16. 11s. 8d. for the annual labour of a first class *efficient* negro. It appears that the compensation money for British Guiana will be about £50 per head. As the planter will have that money either to discharge incumbrances bearing interest, or to invest, it is necessary to take it into account in calculating the wages he may hereafter give without being exposed to greater expense than before the Abolition, when the cost of an efficient labourer, according to calculations I made with planters of eminence, was, as I have said

£ 16 11 8

Taking the compensation money to
be worth 5 per cent. to the planter,
that 5 per cent. would amount for
every efficient labourer to about....

5 6 8

Consequently, if the sugar planter can
obtain efficient labourers who will
provide themselves with everything
for

£21 18 4

per annum, he will be able to raise sugar at the same cost as before the 1st of August, as far as regards labour.

I asked every medical man I conversed with

~~whether~~ Europeans could labour in the field from an early hour to 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning, and a couple of hours in the afternoon. Two of the medical men thought they could not: all the rest were of opinion that they could, provided they could be kept from spirits, and that during the first six months no labour should be required of them, except what might be necessary for their health. The mosquitoes, in many parts of the colony, attack new comers with a severity that would totally incapacitate them for full labour, but after a few months the bites of the mosquito are comparatively harmless. Presuming, then, that Europeans could labour in the field, it becomes a question whether they could be procured for such wages as the planter could afford. I apprehend the £21. 18s. 4d. would not operate as a sufficient inducement. But there is a general conviction that' an European labourer would be fully equal to two negroes; and from the manner in which I have observed the apprentices working I do not think this difference between an European labourer and a negro exaggerated. In British Guiana there are many sugar-estates with much more land than is wanted for cultivation; on such estates European families might be settled with sufficient allotments of land for raising provisions; and with this advantage, and a comfortable cottage, I am inclined to think that respectable persons might be engaged in Europe for the £21. 18s. 4d. It appears to me that it is an experiment deserving the attention of

planters and the government. Your Lordship will observe that in alluding to the introduction of labourers I have always used the term "families." I call attention to this, because I am convinced that the introduction of single men would end in disappointment: without family ties they will interfere with the grand object, negro civilization. Whatever doubts may exist of the ability of European labourers to stand field-labour, there is no question but that they are fully equal to all the duties about the works and buildings, and therefore they may be made available for such purposes; and they would add to the security of the colony. It is true that for such work it is thought that free negroes would be willing to engage themselves, but negroes who would be willing to do even such work would not be likely to remain idle, and therefore it appears to me that it would be expedient to take advantage of every means of diminishing the quantity of work for which the planter is to be dependant on the negroes*.

* Many of the estates are on such a large scale that planters have gone to great expense in abridging labour by the increased use of machinery. The hard labour of feeding the mill and conveying away the green megass is on many plantations performed by machinery. There are also railways for conveying the dry megass to the fireplace, and on one estate a railway is constructing for general purposes. From the best information I could collect, I think it will be found that ploughing is not applicable to this colony, except for a few estates peculiarly circumstanced. Its success on these will soon be known, as the experiment is making by those who spare neither expense nor trouble.

I have heard of contemplated arrangements for bringing persons from various quarters to settle in British Guiana as labourers. It appears to me that government ought to assist and facilitate all such arrangements as much as possible, for the colony cannot be too densely inhabited by respectable characters: with a proper number of inhabitants it may become of immense value to the mother country.

I understand that from the Court of Policy's having been thwarted in their proceedings by the Lieutenant-Governor, there are no means of enforcing agreements with labourers except by a law-suit, in which no man in his senses would engage for such an object. If the information I have thus received be correct, and I have reason to believe it is, I am sure your Lordship will see that the same facility ought to be given to the planter as to masters in England. There are many laws that it will be requisite to pass in anticipation of the termination of the apprenticeship, but as persons much more competent than I am will bring them before your Lordship, I confine myself to that, without which it is not safe for a planter to enter into an agreement with a labourer.

There are other means than the education of the apprentices, that have been recommended as likely to secure their labour when free. The Lieutenant-Governor, in his instructions of the 1st of August to the Special Justices of the Peace, strongly urges the policy of giving the negroes land for raising provisions, in preference to supplying them with fish and

plantains. This has been so little acted on that I may almost say it has been a dead letter. The fact is, that in many parts of the colony it is impracticable, and in others the additional cost to the planter would be more than he can afford, as he is obliged to raise plantains; for the plantain-trees are used as a shade to the coffee-trees. Some sugar-planters find it an advantage to have plantain-fields as a preparation for sugar cultivation, whilst other planters have no land that will yield plantains. It is quite true that there are many other descriptions of provisions that might be raised, but the plantain is so superior that every other must be considered as merely subsidiary. I am, however, of opinion that when the planter, without too great a sacrifice, can satisfy the negroes with land, he ought to do it, to increase the chance of their remaining after the apprenticeship.

One planter has ordered that there shall be erected on his estate a separate cottage for each family, in the middle of a quarter of an acre of land to be railed in. The example, however, cannot have many followers, from the great expense. Another gentleman, a coffee-planter, commenced about eighteen months ago a system in which he intends to persevere to the full extent of his means. He builds a cottage for a family in the middle of an acre of land, which the family may cultivate for their own benefit. He has put 100 acres into half-acre allotments, and when a family fully cultivates the acre round the house,

a half-acre allotment is at their service, and if they also cultivate that half acre, they may have another. This plan the gentleman has not yet been able to carry into effect to any great extent. Being struck by the neatness of one cottage, and seeing furniture in it that must have cost more money than negroes generally devote to such a purpose, I was induced to request to see the man. He is a carpenter, and I found him unusually intelligent. He informed me that he had an acre and a half in profitable cultivation. Being unable to keep up the cultivation without assistance at certain stages, he had to hire some negroes three times in a year. The whole acre and a half was in provisions and fruit of different kinds, and being within a few miles of town, and provisions having been dear last year, he cleared fully £35 sterling. I noted down the returns he had of each article, and the prices he said he had obtained, that I might enquire of competent persons how far his statement might be relied on, and I found there was no reason to discredit any part of it. After the apprenticeship, such a person would not leave the estate; but the system could not be equally beneficial to the negroes on estates at a distance from town. I give these details, because every thing is interesting that bears on the means of procuring labour after the apprenticeship.

There are several other subjects on which I propose to make some observations, but as they may

equally concern other colonies, I shall postpone my remarks until I have visited the islands.

BARBADOES.

On leaving British Guiana I proceeded to this island, where I find the apprenticeship working as satisfactorily as the most sanguine could have anticipated. Indeed, I am informed, by parties who have the best opportunities of judging, that confidence is on the increase, and that some recent transactions (one of them of considerable magnitude) justify the opinion that the value of property has recently improved. There are many circumstances to account for this contrast to the state of affairs in the colony I have left. There, the population is inadequate to the wants of the agriculturist; here, it is more than adequate. There, the waste land capable of producing provisions is abundant; here, there is no productive land uncultivated. There, the wants of the negroes are few, being almost confined to food; here, civilization being further advanced, the wants are comparatively numerous. There, the local attachment is weak or unknown, from the colony being of recent settlement; here, strong to excess. Between fellow-creoles, the greater remoteness of the importation of their respective ancestors confers superiority; whilst the Barbadian creole of recent standing, in yielding to such claim, prides him-

self on his superiority over the creoles of every other colony *. There are many other distinguishing points that might be enumerated, but these are sufficient to account for the Abolition Act pressing injuriously on the one colony, whilst it benefits the other. I use the word *benefit*, it being my impression that the Barbadoes planter has not to apprehend pecuniary sacrifices by the termination of the apprenticeship†, and it must be delightful to him to be surrounded, and to have his land cultivated, by free labourers, instead of slaves.

The apprentices here work nine hours daily for five days in the week, and have Saturday to themselves, which they employ in marketing. There is very little extra labour required, except about the works in crop-time, the expense of which to the planter is about three-fourths of a dollar per hogshhead of sugar.

All classes of negroes here are very decently clothed, and I understand the planters do not confine the allowance of clothing to the letter of the law. They give duplicates of many articles not enjoined by law.

* This love or pride of country has no doubt been produced by the example of the white natives, who consider all those not actually born on the island as foreigners; length of residence, community of interest, or even intermarriage with a Barbadian, do not entitle a native of the mother country to be considered otherwise.

† Although I believe this to be the prevailing, it is by no means the universal, opinion of the planters.

With regard to children under six years of age, I find little uniformity in the proceedings of the planters. Some maintain them as before the 1st of August; others make the parents pay in labour for keeping them on the doctor's list; and not a few leave them entirely to the parents to provide for. I have only heard of three cases of the apprenticing of such children. The expedients resorted to in British Guiana for the abridgment of labour are unknown here, for which two reasons may be assigned; namely, that labour is not so valuable here, and that the estates are not large enough to admit of the expense of the machinery. The plough might be extensively used, but it is not approved of in general. Among other reasons, I have heard it stated that ploughed land suffers more than other land in dry seasons. The soil is certainly poor, and rarely admits of much ratooning, yet when highly manured, the returns are occasionally very great. In the neighbourhood of town, where manure is plentiful, some fields yielded last year four hogshead of sugar per acre.

It is not the custom of this island to allow negroes land for raising provisions. The planters supply food. A planter of great intelligence and experience commenced about eighteen months since a system that he informs me works most admirably. To a family consisting of a man, his wife, and four children, he gives two acres of land, with a comfortable cottage, in consideration of their providing themselves with every thing except medical attendance, and giving to the

estate equal to eight days' labour of one person per week when there are more than four children: an allowance is made for the extra number. The arrangement is for twelve months, and the apprentices who have entered into it are highly pleased: they find two acres sufficient for rotation of crops. The extension of the plan the planter expects will enable him to obtain sufficient labour after the apprenticeship. The same planter has a practice which I have not heard of elsewhere. He has a monthly assemblage of the managers of all the estates under his charge, held on the different estates in rotation: they discuss the proceedings of the preceding month, like an Agricultural Society, and determine the course to be pursued on each estate for the ensuing month.

There are no free persons labouring here in the field, nor will whites act as domestics, for they think it degrading. In Bridge Town, the population of which is estimated at fully 20,000, the free blacks and persons of colour have nearly supplanted the whites, in almost every trade; the consequence is that the lower class of whites are in a state of degradation and destitution, whilst the free blacks and persons of colour are comparatively well off.

On the subject of the education of the apprenticed labourers I shall not dwell, as this island has the good fortune to be the residence of a Bishop and an Archdeacon who are eminently qualified to im-

part to you the fullest information on that deeply interesting subject*.

TRINIDAD.

From Barbadoes I proceeded hither, and I doubt whether there be an island in the West Indies more deserving of the attention of the British government. It is supposed to be sixty miles long and forty broad; the soil is rich, and capable of producing many articles of great value, besides sugar and cocoa, its present staple productions. There is a great difference of opinion as to the proportion the land under cultivation bears to that which is capable of being advantageously cultivated; but I did not hear any one estimate the cultivated portion at more than one-fourteenth, and therefore I am safe in asserting that there is here a wide field open for the beneficial employment of British capital and industry. Among the articles that might be successfully cultivated here, I may name Indian corn, for which some of the poorer islands are de-

* On my return to Barbadoes, on my way to Jamaica, on the 13th of June, I found that the apprentices had been giving trouble, and were not working so well as in March. The change is in part ascribed to the disallowance of the Police Bill, which led the apprentices to suppose that there was no means of coercing labour. They have been undeceived; but their minds have been unhinged, and many planters complain of the difficulty of getting a fair amount of labour.

pendent on the United States. From this dependance it is peculiarly desirable to be relieved, more especially as from causes now in operation increased supplies will be required.

Hitherto the great obstacles to the extension of cultivation have been the want of population, and of confidence. The former can only be removed by overcoming the latter; establish confidence, and population will soon flow into the island. To lay the foundation for confidence, it appears to me to be indispensable that the British laws should be introduced. At present no person can tell what the laws of the colony are. The Spanish law is said to be that of the island, but in addition there are colonial enactments, and besides these there are Orders of the King in Council. These interfere with each other so extensively, that there is not a point on which there may not be a conscientious difference of opinion among the most intelligent lawyers. Indeed, one of the leading legal authorities of the island declared to me that he doubted whether any Englishman held an estate in the colony, the title of which would stand legal investigation; and an old-established merchant assured me that he should consider it dishonest in him to advise any man to invest one shilling in it, as his experience had taught him that no legal instrument could be so framed as to afford more than the shadow of security.

Whilst it was doubtful whether the colony might not revert to the Spaniards, it may have been right

to continue the Spanish law ; but since the final cession of the island to Great Britain, it does appear to me to be impolitic in the highest degree to continue laws that retard, or rather prevent, improvement. For the last fifteen years there has, I am told, been only one sugar-estate owned by a Spaniard.

The mass of the labouring population are Roman Catholics, and they have several chapels throughout the island : for Protestants and Presbyterians there is absolutely no place of worship, except one church in the town of Port of Spain ! Scarcely any thing is doing in the way of instruction ; and until my arrival here I had no notion that there was a British colony for the moral and religious instruction of whose inhabitants so little had been done. All the planters with whom I had communication expressed their sorrow at the deficiency, and would, I am convinced, second the views of his Majesty's government in any attempt to remedy it to the utmost that their limited means permit. Unless very early measures be adopted for enlightening the labouring population, there does not appear to me to be even a chance of their working, after the apprenticeship, for more than bare subsistence, and that may be obtained for one day's labour per week. There are in the island three classes of free persons who have had grants of land, and who might advance themselves by industry ; yet I do not find that any of them labour for the satisfaction of more than their commonest

wants. These three classes are, the Indians, the American negroes, and the disbanded men of the Third (black) West India regiment. The last class have been useful in enabling the Governor to form a police force, which he found he could not complete without them: they, however, would only engage for a short time, and at high wages. The planters have imported labourers from Madeira, Fayal, and Ireland, under indentures for specific periods, and colonial enactments have been passed to enable magistrates to give effect to those agreements. I regret to say that the result has not been such as to dispose the importers to renew the experiment. I am, however, far from thinking that there has been a fair trial; the labourers arrived on some estates before proper accommodation had been provided, and there was, as might be expected, mutual misunderstanding on details, which might be avoided in future.* Four cargoes of Africans, liberated under the mixed commission at the Havannah, have arrived and been located here. The last cargo (consisting of 150 males and 152

* The people from Madeira had their passage paid (five guineas each); they were to be provided with cottages, food, and medical attendance; and to receive, the men five, the women three dollars, per month. On these terms they were under indentures to work for three or four years. These were the terms for the largest importation; smaller numbers may have been engaged on other terms. The Irishmen, I was informed, were to serve five years, and to have 1s. sterling per day for every day of nine hours' actual work; to be provided with cottages, half an acre of land for each family, fish, and medical attendance.

females) arrived very recently, and have been bound as apprentices*. I have made particular inquiry of many of the planters with whom they have been placed, and have had the gratification to learn that they are universally giving satisfaction. During crop, peons from the Spanish Main make their appearance, and afford some assistance, principally in cane-cutting†. In many cases the planter has not to settle with each labourer; he contracts with one, at a fixed sum, and that one hires peons, &c. on the best terms he can. From the free labourers located in the island some trifling assistance is obtained, but it is irregular and inconsiderable. The only chance of obtaining their labour is to wait patiently until they apply for work; any application to them, I am told, would be vain.

There does not appear to be a uniformity of arrangement between the planters and apprenticed

* They are bound for three years, and have, in addition to the allowances to apprenticed labourers, 4*d.* currency per day of actual labour, the first year; 8*d.* for the second year; and 1*s.* for the third year.

† They are allowed 16 dollars per quarre of 3½ acres, for plant-canes and ratoons, and from 28 to 32 dollars for "stand-overs," that is, canes only cut once in two years. I believe "stand-overs" are peculiar to this island; it is not in very rich or very poor soil that the system can be practised. In rich land the canes would lodge, and in poor they would be scorched, but in medium land it is practised successfully. There is a saving of labour and an increased yielding, besides which the land stands ratooning longer, being less exhausted than by cutting annually.

labourers ; but I have generally found that each arrangement includes some provision for the children under six years of age. Instead of working nine hours a day for five days in the week, as in Barbadoes, the apprenticed labourers generally work seven hours and a half every day, except the time to which they are entitled for raising provisions, and the usual holidays.

The sugar planters here are nearly unanimous in the opinion that no reliance can be placed on procuring labour after the apprenticeship. This opinion, it is to be apprehended, will be confirmed, unless the most prompt and efficient means be taken by government to enlighten the minds, and thereby to elevate the habits and wants, of the labouring population.

ST. VINCENT.

I arrived here from Trinidad. A few days previously to my arrival the apprenticed labourers on three estates had refused to work, in consequence of a misunderstanding respecting the allowances to which they were entitled for extra labour. It had been necessary to resort to a strong demonstration of force ; and before my departure from the island they had resumed their labour, and tranquillity prevailed throughout the colony : there were, however, many complaints of the slovenly manner in which work was performed, and one large planter

has reduced his cane-cultivation fifty acres, from a conviction that he cannot keep up the usual quantity.

I have found only one planter who has adopted task-work. The practice is, for the apprentices to work nine hours per day for five days in the week.

Several non-prædials, who are entitled to freedom in 1838, have applied to be classed as prædials, that they may not be made free until 1840. Their motive is, to retain their cottages and grounds.

No child under six has been apprenticed. The planters generally expect the parents to pay in labour for whatever may be done for such children; and the parents are willing enough to engage to do so, but when called on for such extra labour they endeavour to evade it, and in some instances refuse. For extra labour there is no uniform system; some pay a certain sum for each hogshead of sugar, others pay by the crop, and some by time. The usual pay for a day is two bits*. For allowances of provisions beyond the law (for holidays) the apprentices pay in labour. I do not hear of much difficulty in obtaining extra labour about the works and buildings, but for other purposes it cannot be relied on.

I have only found one person in the island (a manager of some experience) of opinion that after the apprenticeship the present population will work

* Bits vary in value in the different colonies, from a fourteenth to a tenth of a dollar. In Jamaica they are equal to $7\frac{1}{2}d$. currency.

continuously; yet I do not hear of the adoption of any measure to supply the expected deficiency. It is the opinion of the medical men to whom I have spoken, and of many of the planters, that Europeans may perform every description of labour required on a sugar-estate. There are not more than from ten to fifteen days yearly without a fine breeze, and the thermometer seldom exceeds 82° in the shade.

The negroes are well clothed. There are many Sunday schools. Instruction by other means is not very extensively practised.

Although it is not customary to ratoon here more than twice, the plough is not much used. Last year an experienced planter tried it on half a field, cultivating the other half in the usual way. There was no difference in the quality of the soil, yet he assured me that the return from the ploughed half was much less than from the other. Scarcely any thing has been done for the abridgment of labour, the planters wishing to avoid outlay. In many quarters there are great complaints of the soil diminishing in productiveness, notwithstanding all that can be done by manuring. Generally there is very little spare land on the estates, in consequence of which, the necessary rest to recover the land can only be allowed by diminishing the cane-cultivation,—a measure few planters have the courage to adopt—and therefore I fear the evil will increase. From all I have heard during my tour, I am convinced that the produce of sugar-estates might be increased,

and the expenses diminished, by the introduction of the modern improvements in English agriculture. In support of this opinion I may quote the experience of a gentleman in the island, who in a few years has rendered most important services to the colony. Although not brought up to farming, he had attended to the cultivation of a piece of land near his residence in Yorkshire. Being a man of research he sought information from agricultural publications and practical farmers, and soon acquired considerable knowledge. Finding his estate in this island managed at great expense, in proportion to its crops, he determined to visit it, and endeavour to discover the cause and apply a remedy. After residing a short time on his plantation he took the management into his own hands. Ruin was universally predicted. Instead of the verification of this prediction, he is now admitted to be one of the most enlightened as well as successful planters in the island. He has greatly reduced expenses (in some departments more than one-half) and he has almost doubled the crops. He is more fortunate than his neighbours in having abundance of land, which enables him without diminution of cane-cultivation to allow rest to one-fourth: he has taught his apprentices the best way of cultivating their provision-ground: without allowing any of it to rest, he has so arranged the succession of crops that the same article will only be raised from the same ground at intervals of six years, which prevents its

impoverishment; he has thus given them an interest in what was formerly only a labour, and he has no apprehension that his apprentices will desert him on the termination of the apprenticeship. Should any leave him, he doubts not but that there will be competition for the vacant cottages and grounds, instead of his having to seek for occupants.

GRENADA.

From St. Vincent I proceeded to this island. I find the apprenticeship system workings much more satisfactorily than the planters had anticipated, that some of them begin to look forward to freedom with diminished apprehension. I almost fear that the improved spirits of the planters may prevent their bestowing timely attention to the best means of supplying that deficiency of labour which I fear will be found inseparable from the change to freedom. Although, on the whole, this must be considered a healthy island, of moderate temperature, there are many sugar-estates in situations so far uncongenial to European constitutions as to preclude the hope that field-labour can be performed by whites. I find a strong predilection for Germans, from the German soldiers who had been disbanded and settled here having been distinguished for sobriety. I believe some planters intend to visit Germany, for the express purpose of selecting a few respectable families to bring here. In this island there is much

more spare land than in St. Vincent, and therefore more encouragement can be held out to European labourers.

This comparative abundance of land has led to a difference in the systems of cultivation. Here, to produce the same quantity of sugar as in St. Vincent, a much more extensive cultivation is kept up, less from inferiority of soil, than of manuring. This extension of cultivation beyond what can be kept in proper condition occasions a great waste of labour, of which the planters are now becoming sensible ; although it will be difficult to reconcile them to diminish the number of their cane-fields.

For extra labour some planters pay money, but generally the arrangement is that the apprentices shall work the same as they did before the 1st of August, in consideration of having continued to them all the allowances beyond the law that had been customary. To these agreements the stipendiary magistrate is a party ; and it is in some measure to the prevalence of such arrangements that I ascribe the comparative absence of differences between the planters and apprentices. These arrangements of course embrace a provision for the children under six years of age.

The negroes generally speak French, and are Roman Catholics. There are many Sunday and some day schools.

For the last three years the island has suffered

greatly from the cane-fly : the injury has been progressive. This year the loss of crop from this insect has been estimated at 4000 hogsheads of sugar : it may not be quite so much, but those who have the best opportunity of knowing assure me this is no exaggeration.

Legal proceedings are suspended. Presuming the cause to be temporary, I only notice the circumstance to call your attention to the construction of the court. It is only the Chief-Justice that is a legal man ; the other Judges are planters or store-keepers, whose dealings must of necessity bias their judgments. They may not be directly interested in the particular causes, but the principle of each decision must affect their interests or those of their constituents. Whilst this is continued no decision can be respected. If economy preclude the payment of more than one judge, let that judge act alone on his own responsibility. As the court is now constituted the colonists cannot be said to have the benefit of a judge of legal acquirements, since his opinion may be overruled by his associates.

ST. LUCIA.

This island has abundance of good land, and therefore may be made valuable. At present the independent planters are so few that it may be said there is general embarrassment, aggravated by litigation. This cannot excite surprise when I state that the old French law, without modern improvements, prevails

here. When a man dies, an inventory is taken of his property, and each item is valued, although some may be rather a drawback than otherwise. No abatement is made for excess of valuation. The total amount is stated, from which the debts of the deceased are deducted, and the balance is declared to be the divisible property of the family; each person has a lien on the estate for the proportion he is legally entitled to, and appears to the world to be possessed of property to that extent, although in most cases the estate of the deceased ought to have been returned insolvent, the debts amounting to more than the real value of the property. On the strength of such liens, money has been frequently raised in England and elsewhere. It is obvious that such a law and practice must be fruitful sources of family dissensions and litigation, destroying every chance of the successful cultivation of the plantations. It is true that Orders of the King in Council have mitigated some of the evils of the French law, but they have not struck at the root. Patching up and mending will not do in such a desperate case. The whole system must be changed, before the prosperity of the island can be brought within the scope of possibility. Why the French laws and language (that being the language in which legal proceedings are conducted) should have been so long continued, in a British colony requiring laws to invite and not to drive away British capital, surpasses my comprehension.

For some years past the revenue of the colony has

fallen short of the expenses, and a debt of about £20,000 has been incurred. In contracting this debt the monies in court belonging to suitors, and even the trifling deposits in the Savings Bank, were applied to the public exigency. The public officers have been paid for the present year, up to the last quarter-day, and there is money in the treasury; but there are many of them who have not been paid for services rendered previously to the present year, and there are persons who have been engaged in public works who are suffering greatly by non-payment. I trust some plan will be devised for placing the finances on a satisfactory footing.

The apprentices work eight hours per day for five days in the week, which allows five hours for cultivating provision-grounds, of which they are allowed as much as they can cultivate; they have no allowance of fish, which they obtain in exchange for a portion of the fruits and vegetables they raise: this barter takes place at the different villages. Hitherto the apprentices have not worked for their masters on Saturdays, having found it more profitable to cultivate their grounds. I however suspect, that they will soon find there is a limit beyond which raising provisions will not be found so advantageous as working for their masters. Fruit and vegetables have now become so abundant, that a greater quantity is required in exchange for fish than formerly, and some of the apprentices have discovered that the labour required in raising them to exchange for fish is

greater than that required to earn money of their masters to buy it, and are acting accordingly. The negroes here are much less addicted to idleness in their own time than I have found in other places; the time belonging to their masters they do not fill up with equal industry.

There is a large free labouring population here: they do not work on sugar-estates, but they are not generally idle. All the labouring classes are particularly fond of finery, and will work to obtain it.

There are here between 4 and 500 persons who have made their escape from slavery in Martinique and Guadaloupe. There is a list of them kept, and the governor assembles them monthly. In several places near the town I observed negroes clearing ground, laying it out in gardens and building cottages, and I was told they were the French negroes*.

ANTIGUA.

From St. Lucia I proceeded to this island, with

* On returning to this island on the 10th of June, on my way to Jamaica, I found the colony in a state of considerable excitement, in consequence of a most important alteration in the constitution of the Court. Instead of three judges of legal education there is now only one, assisted by colonists, in the same objectionable manner as I have pointed out, under the head of Grenada. The two gentlemen appointed to sit with the Chief-Justice here, are largely concerned in business. This I hold to be most objectionable. I believe they accepted the appointments reluctantly, and merely from a desire to prevent the suspension of public business.

a degree of curiosity and eagerness I did not experience in visiting the other colonies. I was anxious to see, and make myself intimately acquainted with, all that related to a population that had sprung from slavery into freedom in one day, by the act of their masters, to whom the British legislature had allowed six years for the change. The bold step of masters gratuitously giving freedom to thirty thousand slaves in one day, and thereby making their own subsistence, and that of their families, dependant on the voluntary labour of those whom they had previously held in subjection, is, I believe, without a parallel in the annals of the world. My great desire to have the best opportunities of ascertaining the result induced me to provide myself with letters of introduction to many of the leading gentlemen of the island ; but I soon discovered that I had taken unnecessary trouble, for I experienced unbounded hospitality and attention from those to whom I had no introductions, as well as from the gentlemen to whom I had been specially recommended. Were I to indulge my feelings I should say more of the kindness of the inhabitants than is suitable in such a report as I am making to your Lordship. I trust what I have said is not out of place ; it renders it unnecessary to state that whatever information I sought was readily afforded to me. Indeed, every planter to whom I applied for information made me welcome to the inspection of

his plantation-book, in which there is distinctly recorded the daily attendance and non-attendance of every labourer who has worked on the estate, at any time since the first of August. I mixed in parties every day, and thereby had opportunities of hearing freely discussed every point of importance; and wherever I heard a difference, I pursued my inquiries until I arrived at as much certainty as the subject would admit of. It is almost superfluous to add, that I visited every quarter of the island.

The principal reason assigned for not taking advantage of the apprenticeship is, that the slaves here were as far advanced in civilization as those in the other colonies are likely to be at the end of it. After having conversed with the negroes here, visited the schools, and observed the respectful deportment and decent appearance of every class of the labouring population, I am inclined to think that the apprenticeship stands every chance of terminating in the other colonies, before the apprentices in some of them will bear a comparison with the present state of the negroes in this island. Here moral and religious instruction are attended to more extensively than I have witnessed elsewhere. It is supposed that about one-fifth of the whole population is undergoing instruction;—a proportion that, I believe, exceeds that of most countries far advanced in civiliza-

tion*. The largest Moravian mission in the world is here. There are twelve ministers, and at each "settlement" there is a school. The colony contributes £300 currency annually, in aid of the mission. The minister at the head of the principal settlement informs me that the number of registered Moravians exceeds fifteen thousand. If any of these conduct themselves improperly in any relation of life, they are expelled, or suspended until their penitence is made manifest. The Moravians, however, do not outstrip in zeal the clergymen of the Church of England, some of whom labour greatly beyond their strength. To perform the whole service twice on Sundays, and also to attend to a Sunday School, is too great an exertion in this warm climate. On Sacrament Sundays the number of communicants at St. John's is so great that, added to the other duties of the day, the weight must bring down prematurely the strongest constitution. The present able and zealous rector is obliged to proceed to England, to recruit his exhausted strength. I make these remarks in the hope that means may be devised for affording such assistance as may save valuable lives.

During slavery it was customary for the planters to supply their negroes with provisions; and when

* A French Admiral, making a tour of the island whilst I was there, expressed to me in strong terms his surprise and gratification at witnessing such a general diffusion of the blessings of education.

there was spare land, to allow them small pieces to cultivate for their own benefit; and, in addition, they were permitted to rear sheep, &c. by which they made money. Although some estates had sufficient land for provisions as well as canes, the island did not produce provisions adequate to the wants of the population. On an average it was dependant on America for supplies, to the extent of three or four months' consumption annually, and in dry seasons, to which it is peculiarly liable,* the dependance on importation was to a still greater extent.

There is a considerable quantity of unappropriated land here, but it is principally of inferior quality, and not likely to repay the expense of cultivation.

The majority of estates had a sufficient number of slaves, to cultivate them to as great an extent as was profitable. Many plantations, however, were under-handed. In this state of things, it was clear that, if no general understanding could be come to amongst the planters respecting wages and allowances, the short-handed estates would benefit under a system of freedom, at the expense of the other properties. The planters taking into consideration

* There was no rain (except a few showers) from the 10th of October last to the time of my leaving the island, in May. This prevalence of dry weather is not, however, without some advantage; it is supposed to improve the quality of the sugar, and it greatly diminishes labour in taking off the crop. The cane juice is so rich here that it is not unusual for 1200 gallons to yield a ton of sugar.

what they could afford to give, and what the negroes, when free, would require, to supply their wants and leave something over to lead to a gradual increase of comforts, fixed on the wages of 1s., 9d., and 6d. currency*, per day, for the three classes into which the labourers on sugar-estates are divided. On referring to the average price of fish and corn-meal (the principal food of the negroes), I find that these wages, for five days in the week, would pay for food, and leave 2s. 7d. for the first class, and 1s. 9d. for the second class, to spend for other purposes. The third class is composed of children, who reside with their parents. In addition to these wages, the labourers are allowed cottages and medical attendance: they may continue to raise stock, and cultivate for their own benefit the pieces of ground they enjoyed as slaves.

These wages and allowances were obviously too high in proportion to the wants of the negroes, which were then nearly limited to food and clothing. Wherever this disproportion exists, whether in cold or warm climates, human nature is such that it would be vain to look permanently for continuous labour from the mass of the population. To secure such labour, the wants must be increased, or the wages diminished, until there is an approximation to, if not an absolute, equality. This principle, which I believe to be of universal application, operated

* Exchange 200: when 1 was in the island it was 225.

against the planters at the commencement. By a reference to the pay-lists of the estates, it will be seen that the attendance was extremely irregular, and that few worked more than for bare subsistence : they pretended that the wages were insufficient, and that if augmented they would labour. Their subsisting for a week on the wages of two or three days, shewed that the cause of their not working was rather that their wages were greater than their wants required, and therefore an increase, although it might have secured temporary work, would have operated against continuous labour. Towards the end of September, the planters became so much alarmed, that an investigation was instituted, and the Secret Council to whom it was entrusted, after obtaining returns of the working of the system on upwards of eighty estates (half the number in the island), made a most gloomy report: gradually, however, the attendance increased, and it is now estimated that there are at work (I do not mean continuously labouring, but giving a fair share of labour for four or five days in the week) about two-thirds of those who worked as slaves. The remaining third consists of young persons sent to school by their parents, and of men and women settled in town in various employments. There are very few capable of working, who do no work at all; and I have not heard of more than half a dozen who have left the island.*

* On returning to Antigua, after having visited St. Kitts and

On estates where the planter or attorney has the tact to conciliate, and make the labourers feel that he is their friend, the crops are taken off without much difficulty ; whereas on plantations where the planter, attorney, or any other person in authority, is unpopular, there is very great difficulty, and the general business of the estates cannot be kept up, the consequence of which is a sacrifice of a portion of the present crop, and the certainty of that of a still greater part of next year's. From a long course of dry weather, the crop of this year was very short, and therefore there has been less labour required than usual to take it off; yet even the planters most popular with the labourers have found it necessary to stimulate them, by making arrangements to enable the industrious of the first class to earn about a dollar a week. After crop there will be comparatively little to do, and such a stimulus will not be necessary ; it may rather be expected that even the wages originally fixed will not be maintained. Whilst the labourers have been obtaining wages for working on estates, they have paid little attention to their own provision-grounds, and have neglected to raise the usual supply of poultry, which has risen greatly in price in consequence.

For the convenience of the labourers, the planters opened stores in central situations, where provisions, &c. were sold. There was no profit charged :

Nevis, I found that twenty-four labourers had gone to St. Lucia to work the *Souffrière* there.

losses soon ensued, and the planters have generally transferred the stores to respectable persons, to conduct on their own account. It is not in the power of these persons to impose on the labourers, who will walk for miles visiting the different places to ascertain where articles are to be obtained cheapest; besides which there are numerous hucksters visiting the estates, who are powerful competitors with the store-keepers. These hucksters are not free from the suspicion of affording facilities for disposing of stolen articles, to the encouragement of dishonesty.

From the uncertainty of procuring labour, the planters generally are either discontinuing or greatly reducing their provision-grounds, which will make the labourers cultivate their own grounds, or they will be deprived of their variety of food. The planters cannot be blamed for studying their interest, so far as to cultivate that which makes the best return; at the same time it is to be regretted that it should be necessary to increase the dependence of the colony on foreign importation.

Desirous of comparing the present expenses of estates, the business of which proceeds satisfactorily, with the expenses during slavery, I have gone into details with several planters, and find the expenses under the two systems nearly the same. The planter has, as formerly, to maintain the old and infirm, but he is relieved from the burden of the children. The expense of medical attendance is

generally reduced one-third: there are no Christmas or other extra allowances: and these advantages, added to the saving of food and clothing, are fully equal to the wages paid. The change has of course operated unequally on the negroes. The man who has merely to labour for himself has benefited largely, whilst the mother of young children has had to submit to a great increase of labour and care. On one estate I visited, a woman had just been confined, and the manager informed me that she had continued to carry megass (about the hardest work performed by women) until within three days of her accouchement. Under the old system she would have been nearly exempt from labour for several months preceding confinement. The mothers generally are so anxious for the education of their children, that many are kept at school after they are capable of working for subsistence. This deprives the planter of many of those on whom he had calculated to form his third class or gang. Whilst visiting some of the schools, the clergyman, by whom I was accompanied, recommended to the strong boys and girls to work part of the day for the relief of their parents, and to attend school the remainder, thereby combining industry with education. I thought the advice was for the good of both parents and children. The Moravians have lost part of their popularity, by not being equally considerate; it is supposed that they never recommend the combination of labour and education,—at least, that they

do not urge its propriety. As marriages increase—and they are increasing rapidly*—the custom of throwing the whole support of children on the mothers will diminish; and as domestic comforts advance, females will be progressively withdrawn from field-labour.† This is a necessary consequence, to which the planters must not shut their eyes: they must endeavour to counterbalance such loss of labour by taking advantage of discoveries and inventions for abridging it. That there is room for improvement will be admitted, when I state that I have seen negroes loading a cart with manure with the cart eight or ten feet from the heap, and taking the manure from the most distant part, and this in presence of the manager, without his taking notice of the waste of time, until I expressed my surprise at the sacrifice of labour. Until lately it has been the universal practice to carry manure in baskets on the head, and the practice is not yet entirely exploded, from the aversion of negroes to any change, especially in this instance, where carrying every thing on their heads is a favourite custom with them, practised from infancy.

* So great is the demand for trinkets and wedding-rings since freedom, that a jeweller here has had to melt doubloons to make them with.

† Hitherto negroes have devoted very little attention to the comforts of their cottages. At present, dress is the great article of expense. On Sunday the men are dressed in as good clothes as their masters; indeed they wear only the finest quality: and the women are equally particular; they will have whatever costs most

From what I have stated to have taken place in St. Vincent, I am disposed to think that a practical English agriculturist might, after a short residence here, introduce many valuable improvements. As there is very little ratooning here, the plough is extensively used, and the climate agrees with horses. I hope some English agriculturists of moderate capital will be tempted to come here ; the climate will be found healthy*, and I have no doubt but that any reasonable expectations might be realized. From a necessity of humouring the labouring population to an extent hitherto unknown, absentee proprietors can have no reliance on their estates being sources of revenue, except by letting them to persons on the spot. There is a fine estate here which I believe will not pay its expenses this year from the crop, and it is the general opinion that next year's crop would to *the proprietor* be unproductive; yet the gentleman who has charge of it has just taken

money. As they advance in civilization, and acquire a taste for domestic comforts, they will discover how unsuitable their dresses are to their condition, and that their money may be more rationally employed than in the purchase of finer clothes than their station requires. The negroes are universally fond of dancing: it is a great honour to open a ball, and this honour is awarded to the negro who will pay most for it: the biddings sometimes reach a doubloon—about £3. 4s. sterling.

* I have seen an English sailor working in the field with the blacks in the hottest part of the day. He had only been three days at work when I saw him, and therefore I cannot say whether he has been able to persevere. It is the only instance I have ever seen in the West Indies of a white man working in the field.

it on lease, at a rent of £1000 sterling per annum for the first three years, and £1200 a year thereafter ; considering, no doubt, that when freed from the restricted authority of an agent, and invested with the power of a principal, he will be able to bring back and retain the labourers who have left the estate. It is supposed that he will realize largely by the lease, and the proprietor has at the same time a certain income, good security being given for the rent. Other estates have been let recently, on terms supposed to be beneficial alike to landlord and tenant. These transactions show that persons of experience calculate on the eventual success of free labour in this island. To secure that success, however, it will be necessary to frame many new laws and regulations applicable to the altered state of society, and I trust that his Majesty's Ministers will put a liberal construction on the Acts of the Colonial Legislature, whose aim is, as has been demonstrated by their conduct, to keep in view the good of the labouring population. I presume to make this observation, from an apprehension that some of the objections raised against the "Special Contract" Act arose from the difference between the present state of this island and that of England not having been adverted to. A sugar estate is a manufactory as well as a farm ; and if the cottages are to be occupied by those who will not work on the estate, other labourers must be procured for whom there would be no houses : it must be re-

membered that there are no villages to which they could repair at night.

The slaves were brought up with a feeling that no one had any claim on them, and all their own wants were supplied without their having occasion to think. Now that they are free, they cannot understand that any relatives, however near, and however destitute, are entitled to share their earnings. It is even difficult to reconcile them to labour in payment for any necessities or comforts supplied to themselves by their employers, whilst unable to work. It is to be hoped that they will speedily acquire more correct notions of the obligations imposed on them by freedom. The spread of Friendly Societies is eminently calculated to aid in producing this. I annex a copy of a memorandum furnished to me by a reverend gentleman who takes a lively interest and an active part in these institutions.* There is a great desire

* There are three Friendly Societies, under the direction of the Rector of St. John's, whose proceedings are regulated by the accompanying articles. It will be seen that the members are exclusively engaged in agriculture, and attending the Established Church, and that the Societies were formed when the members were slaves, and that the alterations in the articles were made to meet their altered circumstances as a freed people.

St. John's Church Friendly Society, instituted Dec. 26, 1832.

Number of Members	Amount of Receipts, made up to Aug. 1, 1834.	Amount of Disburse- ments, made up to Do.	Balance, made up to Do.
360	£ 207 0 9	£ 111 5 7½	£ 95 15 1½

Balance now in hand, this 16th May, 1835,

£ 99 7 8

To account for so trifling an increase in the balance beyond

to establish Savings Banks : the great obstacle is the difficulty of obtaining interest without incurring risk. An arrangement might be made by govern-

what was exhibited on the 1st August, 1834, it must be observed that two more objects have been embraced by the Society since the time of freedom, for which during slavery there existed no necessity ; namely, 2s. a week to every subscriber of 1s. a month, when sick, and 1s. a week to every aged person too weak to work, yet not so disabled as to make it imperative on the proprietor to support him. When, without increasing the subscription to meet these increasing charges, there is yet the same balance in hand, and something more, than on the 1st August, 1834, it is clear that the Society is prosperous.

The two other Societies, which are attached, the one to St. James's and the other to St. Luke's Chapels of Ease, are conducted in the same way, and were established at the same time. The benefit of these Societies was soon felt, and the clergy of the other parishes, the Moravians, and the Methodists, have followed in the same track with the members of their respective congregations : so that it may be safely asserted that almost all our labouring population are thus united together for mutual assistance in time of need.

As to the poorer inhabitants of the towns of St. John, Falmouth, and English Harbour, prior to the formation of the Country Societies they united together for the like benevolent purpose. Their members were composed of free and slaves, and their object was to provide a weekly allowance of 6s. to each man, and 4s. to each woman, when sick, and £5 or under for funeral expenses. Their subscription was 2s. per month from every female, and 3s. per month from every male member. On the 1st of August, 1834, they increased their monthly subscription to 1s. more, in order to obtain the attendance of a doctor *; and this important benefit is secured to the Friendly Society (about 500 in number) under the direction of the Rector of St. John's, and to that under the direction of the Moravians in this town, and

* The sums stated are in *current* money. The 2s. currency is 3d. currency less than the English shilling.

ment for receiving the money on the same terms as that of the Savings Banks in the mother country ; but the English interest would appear low compared to colonial, besides which it is desirable to identify the interest of the labourer with that of the colony. I have been informed of an arrangement in a district of another island, by which the most opulent planters receive the deposits, and allow interest, responsible brother-planters becoming security for principal and interest. I hope some plan that may be made generally applicable will be devised, that the labourer may have the benefit of such excellent institutions.

All the hospitals on estates are abandoned : no labourer will enter one. In this they act very unwisely, as it is impossible for them to have the same conveniences in their cottages. In the first place they have often to pay a person to go for the doctor, and, being without a sick nurse accustomed to administer medicines, they are exposed to dangerous mistakes. As an instance of the consequences of deserting the hospitals, a planter informs me that on his estate three infants have died of locked-jaw since the 1st August ; he had not lost one from the same cause for many years previously.

to that under the direction of the Rector of St Paul's, where the towns of Falmouth and English Harbour are situated.

In this way it is hoped, under the Divine blessing, that our working population in country and in town will be taught the important duty and benefit of rendering mutual and voluntary aid, without becoming burdensome to the parishes.

I find that one of the great complaints against the labourers is, that they are late in turning out in the morning : formerly they commenced work at sun-rise, now they are much later. It is not unusual for an overseer to have to wait an hour or two before they appear. It is found that wherever task-work is resorted to, the labourers perform it expeditiously. The prevalent use of windmills is an obstacle to its universal adoption ; yet I cannot help thinking that it might be introduced in many departments with advantage.

On several occasions I attended the sittings of the Court of Common Pleas. The chief judge is a gentleman of great acuteness and intelligence, but I was much struck with the waste of the public time. From the judges not being men of legal education, the counsel think it necessary to read the details of such cases decided in England as they deem applicable : were the judges lawyers, a mere reference to the cases would generally be sufficient. Further, the counsel, taking advantage of the absence of legal knowledge in those they address, raise and argue points they know to be untenable, and which they would not be permitted to dwell on in England. It appears to me that the judges ought to be paid lawyers. The present judges give their services gratuitously ; but I cannot think that the saving of salary ought to reconcile the colonists to the present arrangement.

Before concluding, I must allude to the situation

of persons in humble life, who were possessed of a few slaves, on whose earnings they were chiefly dependant for subsistence. To such persons the dispensing with the apprenticeship was a hardship deserving of the consideration of government. It may probably be questioned whether a Colonial act, although sanctioned by the King in Council, ought to deprive parties of advantages secured to them by acts of the Imperial Parliament: but, at all events, the case of these poor people is deserving of attention.

ST. KITT'S.

On leaving Antigua, I proceeded to this island, and find the apprenticeship working more to the satisfaction of the planters than in any other colony. Planters who had anticipated difficulty in taking off their crops, admit that they have experienced none, and that the work for the ensuing crop is farther advanced than usual: even the termination of the apprenticeship is now looked forward to with diminished apprehension, and there are persons of property in the island desirous of increasing their stake in land. This happy state of affairs is accounted for by the negroes having discovered, on the outbreaking in August, that insubordination would be promptly suppressed and severely punished, while the stipendiary magistrates, by their firmness, taught the apprentices that good conduct alone could avail them.

The practice here is for the planters to supply the apprentices with food. The island does not raise more than about ten months' consumption annually; yet when there is spare land, portions are given to the apprentices to cultivate for their own benefit, and they rear considerable quantities of stock. On an estate with 236 apprentices, I found they had eighty-five acres for themselves, and upwards of 180 sheep. It is usual to work nine hours per day, for five days in the week. When the apprentices are troublesome, some planters avail themselves of the law to require seven hours and a half per day for six days, which takes away the Saturday holiday. There is no regular system of remuneration for extra labour; some planters allow for the crop, to those engaged about it, six dollars each, with double allowances; others give twelve holidays out of crop-time; and many pay altogether in money. When that is the case, two bits per day is the usual pay for the first class, but a quarter dollar (or three bits) with a beverage of molasses and water, is occasionally given. On one estate the proprietor has adopted a system of free labour, without relinquishing the apprenticeship*; he says it gives satisfaction, but he could not

* He pays four dollars per acre for holing; one dollar per acre for weeding and supplying; the same for planting; and four dollars per acre for every ton of sugar; in consideration of which those thus employed also take out the manure, and plant sufficient ground-provisions for the remainder of the gang: they feed the sick, and find themselves in food and clothing. He

inform me how far it had the recommendation of economy. On another estate, unqualified freedom was given on the first of August to all the slaves, amounting to 264. The estate itself was then let to the attorney, who is since dead, but one of his sons informed me, on my visiting the property, that of the 264 only 36 continued on the estate to work for hire; that even these do not labour regularly, and that he is only enabled to preserve a portion of the estate in cultivation by hiring apprentices on Saturdays. The remaining 228 are dispersed over the island, working occasionally for hire. The free domestics he finds quite unmanageable; when I was in the house there was not one in it to answer the bell, which he informed me was a common occurrence. During slavery, the negroes were summoned to labour by the ringing of the great bell. The free negroes object to be so summoned, as degrading, and were the great bell to ring, not one of them would go to the field.

There is an Agricultural Society here that holds out premiums to free persons to work on estates for hire: there has been only one claimant*.

gives them some ground, and allows them to cut wood and gather cocoa-nuts for themselves; he finds them medical attendance, and if they be more than eight days in the hospital he supplies provisions, thinking they may not have saved money to support themselves longer than that period.

* Extract from the Minutes of Proceedings at the first meeting of the Agricultural Association of St. Christopher's, on the 25th of June, 1831:—

“ The Society, anxious to encourage any free labourers who

There are about five steam-engines here, and about the same number of water-mills; the other estates have cattle-mills or windmills. The cattle-mills have only a covering for the machinery. In other places, particularly Trinidad, the covering extends its protection to the cattle and drivers, an improvement that might be adopted here without much expense. The plough is in extensive use, there being little ratooning. Oxen are universally used, except on the estate of one enterprising and intelligent gentleman of agricultural knowledge, resident in England, who sent out English horses and ploughmen in 1833*. I have taken some pains to ascer-

may be willing to work for hire, either in the cultivation of the sugar-cane or ground-provisions, or the manufacture of sugar; and desirous also of holding out an inducement to them to quit their present precarious mode of obtaining a livelihood, and to enjoy the advantages resulting from constant employment, offer the following rewards:—

“ To any free labourer who shall have worked with one master for the space of six months, in cultivating the cane, or in manufacturing sugar, the sum of £10.

“ To any free labourer who shall have worked with one master, as above, for three months, the sum of £5.”

On the 28th of June, 1834, the Society's premium of £10 was awarded to Phillis, free labourer on the Belmont estate of Mr. Stewart Davis; but no other instance of its having been claimed or merited has occurred.

* On the estate in question there have been two ploughmen since 1833. I saw one of them ploughing with two horses; the other was carting manure, in which he was assisted by apprenticed labourers; and I have no hesitation in saying that the system and arrangement observed are productive of a great saving in labour. The horses are in the highest condition; the men look well, and

tain the relative expense of ploughing with horses and oxen, but I regret to say without success. Manure being valuable is in favour of oxen ; but on the other hand, horses are more to be relied on, and it is frequently important to avoid irregularity and delay. The negroes manage oxen, whilst whites are absolutely necessary for horses, from the carelessness of negroes in feeding, &c. If an accident happens to a horse, or he is worn out, there is a total and heavy loss ; when oxen are past service they are fattened and killed ; or by selling them before they are unfit for work, the stock is kept up at little expense. But the gentleman who has charge of the estate on which the horses are used, has not yet made a calculation of the comparative expense ; and others do not trouble themselves on the subject ; for having oxen, they keep them up without any great outlay at one time, which is more convenient to their finances than the purchase of horses, although eventual economy might be the result.

make no complaint of the climate ; they are both married, and have very neat cottages, with small gardens in front, in which there are flowers and vegetables. The women have full employment in attending to their children and the comforts of their husbands. Recently the white population of the estate has been increased by a wheelwright, his apprentice, and a smith. The smith has only been three weeks here ; but he assures me that from the constant sea-breeze he works with greater comfort than he did in England during summer. These whites must add greatly to the security of the property, and they give to the place an appearance of an English farm-yard, which is truly refreshing in this quarter of the world.

The schools here are numerous, and well attended.

NEVIS.

Although this island is close to St. Kitt's, where I found the apprenticeship system working better than elsewhere, I regret to say that here it is working much worse than in any other colony I have visited. On inquiring into the cause I am informed that many of the estates are managed by inexperienced persons: that the overseers are frequently hired merely for crop time, and that the consequence is constant complaints by and against the apprentices.

There is no treadmill, no cells for solitary confinement; nor is there any police force; consequently there is little use in ordering punishments. To send an apprentice to prison is to gratify him, the rations being liberal, with abundant space for exercise. The negroes, discovering that there are no effectual means of punishing them, neglect their work, and many planters are serious sufferers. One informs me that he is likely to lose upwards of 100 acres of canes this crop, from his inability to enforce the labour allowed by law.

A planter who has two estates has adopted on one of them a system of free labour which has hitherto been satisfactory to the apprentices*, yet on his

* He gives the apprentices houses, pays the doctor, and pays a bit per day to the first class, and others in proportion, in consideration of which they provide themselves, and the poor connected with them, with food, clothing, &c.

other estate the apprentices reject the arrangement.

Close as this island is to St. Kitt's, the soil is very different. There it is sandy; here it is clay; and there are so many stones on some estates as to bid defiance to the use of the plough. This drawback, however, is little felt, as the land admits of ratooning for many years.

The apprentices are allowed nine hours weekly for raising provisions, yet they prefer being supplied by the planter. Extra work is paid for at the rate of two bits per day for the first class, with an allowance of molasses and water. I find a practice here of paying medical men in rum, at a price generally exceeding that of the market. There is nothing done for children under six years of age, except when sick.

Last week there was a cane-piece on fire in four places at the same time, which proved that it was not accidental. In fact, the greatest gloom and despondency prevail; and I should not be surprised to find it proposed in the House of Assembly to forego the apprenticeship; although I confess I cannot understand how labour can be secured in freedom, when under apprenticeship the attempt to enforce it thus fails.

DOMINICA.

My stay in this island has been so short that I can say little from personal observation, but I have

had opportunities of ascertaining the opinions of some of the most intelligent and influential planters, &c.

The colony suffered so much from the hurricane last year, that its deplorable financial situation has been made known to your Lordship, and I trust some relief will be granted.* The public subscription for the lower class of sufferers was so liberal that I understand many of them have actually had their condition improved, but the planters have had no assistance. Some of the coffee-estates have been destroyed beyond recovery, and the proprietors are without the means of supporting their apprenticed labourers.

Generally it has not been necessary to inflict many punishments, but I am informed that work is carried on with little spirit. The apprentices have as much provision-land as they can cultivate, and no question has been raised about the children under six years of age. They are supported as formerly.

Although both have been French islands, the labouring population here are not so fond of finery as in St. Lucia, and therefore they are not so industrious during their own time.

It is not supposed that sugar-estates can be kept up after the apprenticeship.

A new source of employment has sprung up on a sugar-estate here, that promises to be very produc-

* Since my arrival in England I have observed with pleasure, from the Parliamentary proceedings, that relief is to be afforded.

tive to the proprietor. A person has undertaken to work a mount Souffrière on the estate at his own expense, and to give the proprietor half the profit without his incurring any risk. Last Saturday the apprenticed labourers of the estate were paid 168 dollars for one week's working at the Souffrière, during their own time. The sulphur is shipped to the United States of America, where it meets with a ready sale. The working of the Souffrière in St. Lucia was about to commence when I left that island, and it is not likely that similar mountains in the other islands will be allowed to remain unwrought.

JAMAICA.

I have made an extensive tour of this island, and sought information from planters, attornies, overseers, and book-keepers, as well as from persons unconnected with planting, in every quarter I have visited. I endeavoured to ascertain the prepossessions and prejudices of my informants, to qualify myself to form a correct estimate of the value of their communications. I have tested, as extensively as I had the power, the information I received, by personal observation; and the result is a conviction in my mind that the gradual diminution of the sugar-cultivation, during the apprenticeship, and its almost entire annihilation thereafter, can only be averted by the early adoption of decided measures

for enlightening the apprentices, and by the enactment of laws to enforce industry under a state of freedom.

I have observed, with the deepest regret, that between the apprentices and those in authority over them there is an extensive feeling of mutual distrust. Except in one district, the negroes are much less respectful in their deportment towards the whites than in the other colonies: they appear to consider that their masters are unjustly withholding freedom from them, and that their labour is without remuneration, although in most districts they enjoy privileges and advantages greatly exceeding what it is in the power of planters in other colonies to confer. I find the apprentices on some estates possessed of wealth, and enjoying luxuries, unknown in most other colonies. It is quite common to see them riding to church, &c. on their own horses or mules; and, on one estate I visited, two had gigs (subject to annual taxes of £6 currency each,) driven by blacks in livery! The pasture-land in many quarters is unrivalled; and the planters, generally, are most liberal of it to the apprentices, who are permitted to rear horses, &c. Provision-ground is also peculiarly luxuriant; the apprentices are not restricted in quantity, and they have every facility afforded (in many instances at great expense to the estates) in conveying their extra provisions to market. For the cultivation of their provision-ground they have the half of every

Friday, and, throughout the year, they have Saturday wholly to themselves. Still, distrust and dissatisfaction are nearly universal; and I have not met with an individual of experience who is of opinion that there is even a chance of maintaining sugar-cultivation after the apprenticeship, except on estates peculiarly circumstanced. Unfortunately, this gloomy anticipation is likely to assist its own accomplishment; it induces persons whose circumstances will admit of their leaving the colony, to form all their plans and regulate their proceedings on the calculation of retiring in 1840, when the apprenticeship will terminate. I however hope that measures will be speedily adopted to reassure them, and prevent so great a calamity as the secession of persons of wealth and experience, at the time their influence will be most wanted.

The two leading evils of this island are, absenteeism, and what may be termed a monopoly of attorneyships;—these place the negroes at a distance from those to whom they ought to be able to look as their best friends. There are whole parishes with scarcely a resident proprietor of magnitude; and in an examination into the working of the apprenticeship which took place before a Committee of the House of Assembly, in November last, it will be seen, by the parliamentary papers, that one gentleman was examined who had forty-eight estates, with a population of about 10,000, under his charge. Another witness had charge of twenty-

nine estates (besides one of his own), with from 7 to 8,000 apprentices. When the size and population of estates are considered, it will be obvious that only a nominal superintendence can be exercised by such attorneys, even when the properties are contiguous; but that when they are scattered, as is frequently the case, no one not gifted with ubiquity, can even go through the form of attending to many of the important duties of an attorney. There are instances of estates upwards of 100 miles distant from each other being under the same attorney; and 100 miles here, considering the climate, roads, and modes of conveyance, are equal to 200 miles in England.

To these combined evils of absenteeism and attorneyship-monopoly, may be traced much of what is distressing and alarming in the present position of affairs. But for absenteeism, it is impossible that the negroes should not have advanced further than they have done in civilization. Had a proprietor resided on each estate, he would have found it for his interest and comfort to be surrounded by persons who could read, and understand the duties of social life; he would have studied to enlighten those on whom his own comfort so much depended, and with whom he must be in daily intercourse. Attorneys, whose visits are necessarily short, suffer little or no personal inconvenience from the ignorance of the negroes, with whom they rarely come in contact, their communications being

principally with the overseer*. Overseers are so engrossed by their daily laborious occupations, that they have no time to bestow on the mental improvement of those under them; and the book-keepers are too subordinate to interfere. Thus, with few exceptions†, the daily business of the estates of absentees proceeds, without instruction forming any part of it; and the negroes are without a family at their head by whose example they might profit. In one of the parishes I visited, the time was in the recollection of some of the residents when about forty close carriages were seen every Sunday taking families to church; whereas there are now only two such carriages in the parish, the other families having deserted the island. In some large districts it is uncommon to meet with a married man of influence. In such a state of society it would be unnatural to expect a high moral tone, or much regard to external religious observances. Indeed, where there is not ready access to the society of amiable females of education, indifference to our highest duties will ever be soon found to prevail. Almost every man I conversed with deplored the state of society, and expressed anxiety for its improvement; but too many have

* Overseers in Jamaica are the same as managers, and book-keepers the same as overseers, in the other colonies.

† I could name some planters who have provided for the moral and religious instruction of their negroes on the most liberal scale.

entanglements in which they have been involved, in opposition to their judgment, to be able to set the example they desire with effect; and therefore the amelioration will be a work of time, and must be founded on the introduction of married families, and encouragement of married men in every department. Hitherto marriage has been an obstacle, if not an insuperable bar, to employment as overseers and book-keepers. Hereafter, I trust, it will be made the reverse, consistently with the interest of employers. In my observations on British Guiana I have offered such suggestions as I thought might point to measures to produce that result: my remarks are equally applicable to this colony.

Considering that many estates here are owned by persons whose property in the mother-country renders them independent, and many others by persons whose incumbrances render any attempt at extrication hopeless, I do not anticipate any great accession of resident proprietors; but I look to an improvement in society from the difficulties of the planters: I hold it to be impossible to make the majority of sugar-estates sources of revenue without a system of economy and management such as can only be conducted by actual residents, who can apply daily or rather hourly superintendence, and who can check extravagance, and redress grievances, without control. With such a system, estates which would entail loss on non-residents might be made productive

to laborious men of agricultural and planting experience,* and therefore such parties will no doubt be found to give fair rents.† This would supply a class of society much wanted, and lead to many obvious advantages to the community at large. Estates on a large scale, and favourably circumstanced, proprietors may still find productive under attorneys; but it is clear that such proprietors will not do justice to their apprentices if they do not employ attorneys whose proximity of residence will render them daily accessible to complaints, &c. Under the new system, attorneys may be said to stand between those under their charge and the special‡ magistrates, to whom appeals ought only to be necessary when the attorney cannot succeed in reconciling differences. The very frequent references now made to special magistrates destroy the good feeling that

* English agriculturists, although superior to Colonial, would act rashly to embark in such undertakings without witnessing here more than one revolution of the earth round the sun, as its influence on the soil, &c. is greater than in the mother-country. But with the practical knowledge brought from England, and by taking the benefit of the experience of long residents here, I do not apprehend that the probation of an English agriculturist would require to be of long duration.

† I am acquainted with an instance of an overseer having recently offered a liberal rent, with good security, for an estate which has been unproductive to the proprietor for several years past; and I have heard of many negotiations now in progress.

‡ The stipendiary magistrates are called *special* magistrates in Jamaica, the word *stipendiary* not being necessary to distinguish them, as special commissions are not given here to planters, as in the other colonies.

ought to be encouraged between the negroes and their employers, and which good feeling planters must endeavour to foster, if they desire to have labourers after the apprenticeship. It appears to me that under existing circumstances it would not be more absurd to appoint a special magistrate to districts remote from each other (instead of a concentrated district) than to appoint the same person attorney for estates in different districts*. Even with every advantage of residence, an attorney of the present day who faithfully discharges his duties has no ordinary difficulties to contend against in making the new system work. It is only natural to suppose that the overseers and book-keepers should be out of humour with a system that deprives them of authority to which they had been always accustomed. Almost to a man they have predicted ruin as the inevitable consequence of the change, and therefore they cannot be expected to be over-zealous in overcoming obstacles to the falsification of their predictions, especially as their own immediate incomes are not dependent on success.

Whilst alluding to the amelioration of society, I

* In defence of the system of one person acting as attorney for many estates, the necessity of economy is pleaded, it being supposed that such attorney will act for a smaller salary than a person who holds a smaller number of powers. I believe this is not the case; and even were it so, the impolicy would not be diminished, as the ability to render efficient services for salary ought to be the first consideration. By naming the same person for contiguous properties only, services and economy may be more effectually combined.

cannot refrain from expressing the deepest regret at the inconsiderateness of some planters resident in England, in sending out numbers of unmarried men without any families to be located on their estates. On one pen I found eleven, lately imported; they were working to the satisfaction of the overseer, but their services will be dearly purchased, by disturbing the domestic attachments and arrangements of the negroes. That there will be such interference can only be doubted by those who expect these white men to marry black women—a matrimonial union for which the taste is yet to be acquired.

As emigration has hitherto been conducted, much mischief and little good has resulted. The Colonial Legislature encouraged emigration by a bounty of £15 currency on each person imported, without regard to age or character. This unqualified bounty, as might have been expected, operated as an encouragement to introduce people on speculation. Many were engaged, in Germany and elsewhere, without inquiry into character; these persons have deteriorated, instead of having improved society, besides occasioning a heavy burden on the public. Even children, born on the passage out, have been paid for as emigrants. I hope this act will be amended, by limiting the advantage to those whose conduct for a given period after arrival may entitle them to reward. It is so essential to show a moral example to, and to avoid interference with the do-

domestic attachments of, the negroes, that single men, unconnected with families, ought not to be introduced; and great care ought to be taken not to engage any family without sufficient proof of previous good character. Emigration, thus regulated, would prove a blessing to this country, and at the same time benefit Great Britain. In many districts the climate is suitable to European constitutions, and every description of labour might be carried on without prejudice to health; besides which, I believe there is no part of this island in which whites may not do all the work on coffee, pimento, and ginger plantations; and on sugar-estates, all about the works and buildings, as coopers, carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, boiler-men, &c. during crop, and out of crop as plough-men, cattle-men, wood-cutters, and in carting manure; consequently there is a great field for white labour. The legislature, in addition to the bounty alluded to, have voted sums not exceeding £5000 for each of the three counties into which the island is divided, for the establishment of a township in each. If this money be judiciously expended, incalculable benefit may result: by forming these townships of such families as I have described, and giving each family a dwelling, and sufficiency of provision-land, rent-free, for a liberal period, with the full benefit of their industry, they would soon supply valuable labourers for plantations, and encourage the formation of smaller communi-

ties, to the extension of cultivation to districts hitherto neglected. It is only by calling in the aid of free labour that the prodigious resources of this magnificent country can be called forth. In rivers, bays, and harbours, Jamaica is peculiarly favoured; thus affording the greatest facilities to internal improvement.

It appears to me that planters, in their eagerness for emigrants, are not sufficiently cautious in their selection, as to country as well as character, foreigners being as acceptable as Englishmen. It is undoubtedly a great object to increase the number of labourers in a country so under-peopled, but it is still more important to improve the state of society, which I humbly conceive is more likely to be deteriorated than improved by the introduction of persons of foreign habits and speaking a foreign language: it is only to persons from the mother-country that I look for the desired improvement. For mere labourers I have heard of none equal to the Africans who have been released under the mixed commission, and sent to Trinidad. It may be deserving of the consideration of government how far it may be made compatible with views of philanthropy to encourage arrangements for importing negroes from Africa, under similar indentures to those entered into by persons from Madeira and elsewhere.

Before finishing my remarks on emigration, it is proper that I should state, that a question has been

raised here how far it is competent to turn the tradesmen of estates into the field, to make way for white tradesmen. In some of the colonies the right has been exercised without being questioned. In others, doubts have been raised, and I understand it has been decided that the planter has the right. Here the Governor has submitted a case to the Attorney-General, whose opinion has not yet been given. If the opinion should be against the right claimed, it will be a serious obstacle to emigration. Should it be in favour of the planter, I still hope that it will be exercised judiciously and with consideration, so that those who have attained advanced years in a particular employment may not be turned to labour less congenial to their health and inclinations. On most estates there are many whose habits are not so fixed as to make a change of occupation a hardship, and therefore there is a fair field for the employment of whites, after giving due consideration to the claims of those of advanced years.

I observe with pleasure that a spirit of individual enterprise is beginning to show itself, in attempts to improve the prevailing system of agriculture. Considering the rapid strides of modern improvement in the mother-country, and how little change has been effected in the colonies, it is reasonable to suppose that there is much room for improvement here. The more extensive the introduction of Europeans, the greater will be the chance of success. With the negroes, nothing new has a fair

chance : besides being deficient in skill and care, they are so wedded to old habits that it is with extreme difficulty they can be reconciled to any innovation, however obvious the advantage of it to themselves. As an instance, I may mention, that when wheel-barrows were introduced for the conveyance of manure, as a substitute for carrying it in baskets on their heads, the negroes unwillingly submitted to the change, and even after having seen the proper application of the wheel-barrow, carried it on their heads when empty, and would have so carried it when full, had their strength permitted. Several planters have sent English horses and ploughmen, to substitute ploughing with horses for ploughing with oxen, which has hitherto been universally practised here. Knowing that importance is attached by planters in England to this change, I have been at some pains to inquire into the chances of its succeeding, and to what extent the planter may be benefited by the utmost success. I regret to say, that all the information I have been able to collect does not enable me to arrive at satisfactory conclusions on these two heads. Some years since, an intelligent planter made the attempt of ploughing with English horses ; he found the horses were unable to contend against the climate, and the obstinacy of the soil, and he abandoned the project. Since then an experiment with a mixed-breed of English and Creole horses has failed. For this climate the Creole horses are found most hardy for whatever their strength is equal to ; but it is

not thought they are powerful enough for ploughing. I have stated, under the head of St. Kitt's, an instance of English horses thriving at plough there; and ploughing with horses is common in Antigua; it is therefore probable that there are some parts of this island in which English and other horses may plough without injury, but I apprehend such ploughing will be found impracticable as a general system. Where horse-ploughing is practicable, its advantage is the point to be inquired into. On this I believe I may say that the practical planters of Jamaica are nearly, if not quite, unanimous. They say, the greater expensiveness of the food of horses, the cost of keeping up the stock, and the necessity of having whites to take charge of them, together with the more expensive harness and the deficiency of manure, entitle oxen to a decided preference. On the other hand, the advocates for horses contend, that white labour is as cheap as black; that the more expensive food of horses gives manure that makes up in quality what is wanting in quantity; that the smaller number of horses required makes the outlay as little as for oxen*; and that the superior ex-

* Oxen may now be purchased for one-half the price they cost a few years since. This fall is attributed to the removal of negroes from worn-out sugar estates to pens, thereby diminishing the demand and increasing the supply at the same time. The increased use of machinery, and the impoverished state of the planters, compelling them to economize as much as possible, have, no doubt, also had some influence in diminishing prices.

pedition and certainty of horse-ploughing more than compensate for every disadvantage that can be fairly urged against it. Until these points can be settled by accurate calculations, founded on actual experience, the question of comparative advantage cannot be solved. Most planters think that the power of oxen may be made more available than hitherto by improved harnessing. The present mode appears most defective, yet an experienced planter told me that it had its advantages on the roads, by enabling the cattle to extricate waggon and carts from ruts, by a side-movement, more expeditiously than could be done if harnessed in the English fashion; and that an English ploughman, who harnessed his oxen as in England, had been sadly embarrassed in ploughing, to overcome this propensity to side-movements on every obstruction. Both advantages may, however, be secured by not appropriating the same cattle to carting and ploughing.

In my tour through the island, I have not found uniformity in the arrangements with the apprentices, or in the hours of labour. Some planters take the legal labour of forty hours and a half per week, in nine hours per day for the first four days, and four hours and a half on Friday. Others take eight hours per day for the first four days, and eight hours and a half on Friday. The consequence of this difference is, that the shell blows for dinner at different hours on adjoining estates, and the negroes for whom the shell blows last, consider themselves ill

used, not adverting to the difference of arrangement. On some estates, all beyond the legal hours of labour is paid for in money; on others, additional hours of daily labour are paid for in extra allowances of food, clothing, &c. On one plantation I found the apprentices worked ten hours and a half per day for five days in the week, in consideration of various indulgences and privileges. It appears to me that such a want of uniformity is injurious to both masters and apprentices. It gives rise to comparisons and dissatisfaction. In an island of such vast extent, with great diversity of soil and climate, it may be inexpedient to fix the same hours throughout the colony for commencing and ending work, and for meals; but no planter with whom I conversed saw any objection to each parish fixing specific periods for the forty hours and a half per week, and for meals; and I found most planters concur in the opinion, that it would be highly desirable to pay for all extra labour in money, and to limit the supplies of food, clothing, &c. to the strict letter of the law. By thus limiting the allowances all invidious comparisons would be done away with, and by paying in money for extra labour, the apprentices would be supplied with the means of procuring the additional allowances, and at the same time learn something of what they must practise when free. Whilst all their wants are supplied for them, they are prevented from thinking of the future, and will enter into a state of freedom with-

out any preparation or forethought. Uniformity of wages I do not consider practicable or desirable; each planter will give according to his exigencies, and the apprentices can have no cause of complaint, it being free to them to work extra hours for whom they please*. The cost of extra labour I do not find to be the same on any two estates. I have found it as low as 1s. and as high as 38s. currency, per hogshead of sugar. Some mills only require to be kept at work fourteen hours in the twenty-four, and others, from defective machinery or other cause, are at work the whole twenty-four. Task-work is little resorted to here, except in digging cane-holes as extra labour. The planters assign as a cause the great differences in soil, &c. Such is, no doubt, a good reason for not fixing a scale for the whole island, or even for any one parish; but there can be no insurmountable obstacle to an amicable arrangement with the apprentices of each estate for such work as is done elsewhere by task, as I am convinced that in general the apprentices would be willing to undertake and would do more as task-work than they do now by time. It is found in every colony I have visited, that whatever is done by task, is performed expeditiously, the negroes being anxious

* I found instances of apprentices working extra hours on other estates, in preference to those of their masters, though at the same wages. In one case two neighbouring planters had the extra labour of each other's apprentices, without any difference in the rate of wages, or in the cultivation.

to have as much time for themselves as possible : they set a high estimate on their own time, whether it is to be wasted in idleness, or beneficially employed. In support of this I may state, that, since the apprenticeship, it will be found that the hospitals have had fewer inmates than formerly* ; and that, although many are ready enough to attend school in the time belonging to their masters, they have great reluctance to giving up for that purpose any time of their own.

With regard to the working of the apprenticeship system, I am afraid I cannot report favourably. I do not think that there has been much of the crop of this year lost for want of labour, planters having devoted all their strength to taking it off ; but this has been to the neglect of other branches of the business, and the consequence is, that the cane-fields for next crop are in many places so dirty and overrun with weeds that full returns cannot be expected from them. Fewer fields have been planted this year than usual ; in short, every species of work that could be postponed gave way to sugar-making, and I apprehend it will be impossible to make up by subsequent exertions for the neglect. It is more difficult to secure continuous extra labour here at a moderate rate than in other colonies, from its being more advantageous to the

* Whilst in the hospitals, the apprentices of course lose their own time as well as their masters'.

apprentice to apply his own time to raising provisions than to work for his master at reasonable wages ; and on Saturday they do not think of working, that day being devoted to marketing, &c. From an early hour in the morning the roads in the neighbourhood of towns present a lively appearance, from the number of well-dressed negroes resorting to market with fruit, vegetables, &c. on their heads. In saying that extra labour can only be obtained regularly by paying highly, I beg to exclude the digging of cane-holes, which is generally done at less expense than before the abolition of slavery ; yet being performed as task-work, the negroes exert themselves, and earn largely in a short time. I saw the pay-list of an estate, where the holes were four feet square, and about six inches deep, where able-bodied apprentices had been paid frequently equal to 6s. 8d. per day. Each planter must regulate the wages according to his soil and system. On some estates cane-holes are three feet and a half square, and six inches deep ; on others, four and a half and ten inches : different rates of wages must of course be established. In some districts ratoons yield fifty per cent. more than cane-plants ; in others, cane-plants produce fifty per cent. more than ratoons. In some districts ratooning is not carried beyond three years ; in others, it is extended to ten and fifteen. These discrepancies are easily accounted for ; but it is unnecessary to

2049

trouble you with explanations, my object being merely to state the existence of such variety.

I have found the working of the apprentices very much influenced by the character and conduct of the special magistrate of the district. Where the special magistrate understands and performs his duty, the working is comparatively little complained of; but, where he is deficient, complaints are universal, and a great sacrifice of the interests of the planter is the consequence. Too much care cannot be taken in the selection of special magistrates, for on them mainly depends the good or bad working of the apprenticeship system. Here the duties of the special magistrate are more arduous than elsewhere, and I cannot help remarking that these functionaries are still inadequately paid. It is impossible that persons of their rank in society can pay house-rent, keep up the requisite establishment of horses and servants, and support even a moderate-sized family, on £450 a year. The consequence is, that many of those who are married have been obliged to leave their families behind them, thus depriving themselves of the happiness of domestic life, and the community of the benefit of having families of respectability located in every district of the island; a consideration which I regret to say has been too much neglected in appointments to official situations in the colonies. As there is nothing that so much forwards improvement in the West Indies as the settlement of

respectable families there, it is earnestly to be hoped that this will never in future be lost sight of.

From the great importance of this island it must be the anxious desire of his Majesty's government to adopt such measures as may make freedom a blessing to those on whom it is conferred, and a benefit to the mother country. To afford even a chance of such result, the measures must be prompt and efficient, for I will not conceal from your Lordship that the difficulties to be overcome are of a formidable character. In this island the free negroes will have opportunities of gratifying a propensity to idleness beyond those presented in the other British West India islands. There is a superabundance of land, adapted for raising provisions, that may be purchased for about twenty shillings currency per acre, and two acres are sufficient, with about twelve days' labour, to yield provisions for a family for a year: besides which there are nearly boundless tracts of unappropriated land, on which negroes may squat themselves, unless extraordinary means be employed to prevent it. It is supposed that this island contains about five million acres, of which only 2,333,180 are appropriated (that being the quantity on which the land tax is paid) whilst quit-rent has been paid on no more than 2,303,313 of the 2,333,180. Consequently there will be great difficulty in keeping idle negroes from squatting, and limiting their labour to the procuring of bare subsistence. The abstraction of

labour will, in all probability, be almost exclusively from the sugar-estates. The coffee-planters are so little apprehensive of being injured by the termination of the apprenticeship, that I have witnessed instances of increasing cultivation, and have heard of the contemplated establishment of new plantations, as well as of speculations for raising ginger, pimento, and tobacco, by free labour. When all are free, it is not to be expected that the growers of such articles will have difficulty in procuring labourers. Now that the number of free labourers is extremely limited, they will not work continuously, even on such productions. It was mentioned to me by an old resident, that in his neighbourhood eighty-three slaves had some years ago been made free under a will. They were located on a pimento-walk, and during crop had an offer of a dollar a day for picking: only thirty-seven were tempted to this easy labour by such enormous wages the first year, and thirteen the second year; subsequently not one would pick; they support themselves by raising provisions, and fishing.

Some of the families lately imported from England are working satisfactorily on a coffee-estate; and I think that if the negroes should refuse to work when free, coffee-planters may easily support their cultivation by English families.

It appears to me that the primary object ought to be, to advance the present negro population in civilization as rapidly as possible; to make themselves

of its advantages, and willing to work to procure and retain them. It will not be sufficient to establish schools in central situations; attendance must be made compulsory, until they are capable of appreciating the value of education. It may be deserving of consideration whether the negroes ought not to be required to contribute towards the payment of teachers; from the liberality of the planters every deserving negro has or may earn the means, and they value most what they have to pay for. When negroes are civilized they will not readily give up comfortable cottages and abundance of provision-lands. It is civilization, and their attachment to their cottages and grounds, that will form the hold of the planter on the labour of the negroes. It is clear they do not generally contemplate the abandonment of their present dwellings, for it has been observed in almost every quarter that when a negro has to repair or build a cottage he is doing so more substantially and with greater care than formerly, under the persuasion that at the end of the apprenticeship it will become his own. I have heard of many instances of apprentices who, wishing to buy their freedom, and in some cases having even gone the length of paying for it, withdrew from the contract on learning that freedom would be accompanied by the forfeiture of their dwellings and provision-grounds.

In my observations on Savings Banks for other colonies, I have stated the difficulty presented by the

inability of their advocates to point out any *secure* means of obtaining interest on deposits. In this island that difficulty may be easily overcome, for there is colonial paper bearing interest issued under the authority of the legislature, in which the deposits may be invested with perfect safety, and without the drawback of giving the depositors a stake out of the colony, to the diminution of the identity of interest it is desirable to preserve. I trust the colonial legislature will afford encouragement to such valuable institutions.

I cannot conclude my observations on Jamaica without expressing regret that there has been nearly an end put to public social meetings. Since the legal equality of persons of colour, such meetings would be open to their attendance; and the whites, especially the Creole whites, cannot readily reconcile themselves to the company of persons, whose exclusion heretofore has caused them to be looked on as inferiors. I trust that however strong early prejudices and present feelings may be, the whites will yield with a good grace to a change effected by the liberal opinions of the age, which will not recognize inferiority from mere colour; and that they will not refuse to admit to society persons whose education, conduct, and station, would entitle them to admission, if whites. Every well-wisher of the colony must desire to promote harmony and good feeling among those whose duties require personal intercourse. I know that many of the whites are quite

willing to promote the annihilation of distinctions, which cannot be preserved consistently with the true interests of the colony.

In the course of my tour through the colonies I have had frequent conversations with naval men on the open, daring, and successful continuance of the slave trade ; and they one and all expressed surprise that the British government should afford facilities to it by making the island of St. Thomas our packet-station. They say St. Thomas's is principally supported by the profits of the slave-trade, and that the inhabitants avail themselves most liberally of the means our packets afford of procuring information of the stations of our men-of-war, which information is speedily conveyed to the slavers. I am not qualified to offer an opinion, but naval men assure me that the packet-station might be removed to the British island of Tortola without the slightest inconvenience to the service, whilst the removal and the making that island a free port would benefit Tortola and the neighbouring British islands, which are greatly in want of all the aid the British government can give them. It is notorious in Jamaica that British capital is largely employed indirectly in the slave-trade. Large and numerous shipments of goods from Liverpool, &c., arrive here merely for trans-shipment to ports from which the trade is carried on direct ; from these ports the goods are sent to Africa in exchange for slaves.

The officers of his Majesty's Customs here may be able to furnish valuable information on this head, should government desire to investigate the subject. Some of the finest fast-sailing schooners that belonged to this island have been sold for the slave-trade, and are actively employed in it; indeed, I am informed that some government schooners distinguished for fast-sailing, sold since the war, are now in the same service.

It may not be improper for me to observe, that in Jamaica the arrangement for the packet-steamers landing mails at Jacmel, in St. Domingo, is much complained of. I can bear testimony to its inconvenience, for I was near losing my passage in the packet from St. Thomas's to England in consequence, and should have lost it, had not the captain of the steamer exercised a sound discretion in passing without waiting to land the mail. The steamer in which I was (the Columbia) arrived off Jacmel when the weather rendered it impracticable to go or send in, and there being no appearance of a change the captain proceeded to St. Thomas's; he did not reach it until the forenoon of the seventh day, and the packet, by the Post-Office regulations, could not have postponed sailing longer than five o'clock in the afternoon of that day; which clearly shows that, had the captain of the Columbia waited to land the mail at Jacmel, he must have been too late at St. Thomas's

for the packet for England, the consequences of which, to the planters and merchants of Jamaica, might have been most disastrous. From detention at Jacmel, the Dee steamer, with the mails for the packet immediately preceding the last, was too late in arriving at St. Thomas's, and therefore two mails, with originals and duplicates, went home by the packet immediately preceding that to which the Columbia was conveying mails: had any accident befallen her, and had the Columbia been too late, the merchants in England would have been deprived of intelligence by three successive packets, and thereby have been without information for regulating their insurances by vessels sailing on the 1st of August, the most important shipping period of the year. No other conveyance could have carried home accounts from all the shipping-ports in time for effecting insurances. I understand that it frequently happens, that there are not more than two or three letters to take from Jacmel, and that there are other parts of St. Domingo at which the steamers might touch with less chance of detention. When I was going from Barbadoes to Jamaica, in a man-of-war, touching at Jacmel protracted the passage fully twelve hours.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

In nearly all the colonies I visited I heard complaints of the unsatisfactory state of the currency, and a very general expression of a strong desire for the introduction of the coins of the mother country as the established currency of the colonies. At present the coins are so numerous, and of such diversified value in the different colonies, that elaborate calculations are required to ascertain their relative value. In British Guiana the accounts are kept in guilders, in some islands in dollars, and in others in colonial currency, fluctuating in value according to the ever-varying rate of exchange. In Trinidad, the dollars most in circulation have a piece taken from the centre; in St. Lucia, the dollars are cut into three unequal parts. In fact, there is no end to the contrivances resorted to for the purpose of meeting the exigency of the moment. The guilders will not pass in the islands, nor will the Trinidad and St. Lucia dollars be received out of their respective islands.

During the existence of slavery, the inconvenience of this state of things was felt, and, in all probability, the necessity of a remedy would have been pressed on the British government, had not the minds of the planters been kept in constant excitement by the continual agitation of more momentous questions. Now, however, that the dealings in

money are greatly increased by the payment of wages to the free labourers in Antigua, and for the extra services of apprenticed labourers in the other colonies, with the prospect of the payments being still further augmented to an enormous extent on the termination of the apprenticeship, it is highly desirable that the remedy should be made effectual, the recent supplies of British money, though liberal, having only mitigated the evil.

The only difficulty that presents itself to my mind is, to fix the sterling value of the accounts now in existence with perfect fairness to both debtor and creditor. It may be impossible to frame any measure that shall place these parties in the precise situation in which they now stand, but an approximation may be made sufficiently near to satisfy substantial justice, which is all that can be attempted when an old system is to give way to a new. By the act for the abolition of slavery, it is provided, that the twenty millions of compensation shall be distributed according to the average prices of slaves in the respective colonies, during the eight years ending the 31st December, 1830. This period was specially selected, as one during which there had been less to affect the value of colonial property than in other recent years: following up this example, the average rate of exchange in each colony may be ascertained for the same period, and all currency debts declared to be sterling debts, according to such averages; the debts in each colony

to be converted by the average of the colony in which the debts exist. Or, if there be any objection to this course, the conversion into sterling may take place by the rate of exchange on any given day: I should say a past, in preference to a future, day, to guard against speculations to influence the exchanges. Either of these arrangements would be preferable, for both debtors and creditors, to the existing system, which encourages litigation and irregularity of settlements. If a debtor be pressed for the payment of a currency account whilst the exchange is very low, he is tempted to offer unreasonable opposition, in the hope of a favourable change, which exposes the creditor to delay and expense. When I left British Guiana, the exchange was *f*14, a few years ago it was *f*17, being a difference of more than 21 per cent; whereas with sterling money the difference would necessarily be limited to the freight and insurance on British coins. In Demerara there is an issue of paper to the amount of *f*2,199,770, but the colony has investments in English public securities to nearly the same amount*, which yield dividends of between 4 and £5000 a year. These investments are considered as a guarantee to the holders of paper for its eventual safety. This, however, is not sufficient to preserve the credit of the paper. When a holder wants specie, it is poor consolation to him to be told

* Viz. £73,747 6s. 7d., 3 per cent Consols; and £29,807 14s. 10d. Bank stock.

that there is money in England he cannot touch ; he must sell the paper for whatever it will bring, and therefore it occasionally happens that the paper is at a discount. This grievance might be obviated to the benefit of the colony as well as of individuals. Let the Court of Policy enact that, on the production, at an office in the colony, of *f*7,250, or any larger sum, in paper, the holder shall receive a bill on the trustees in London (in whose names the investments in England stand), at the exchange of *f*14 : 10, and, that such paper may be reissued at the exchange of *f*14 : 5,—the proceeds to be re-invested. As there would thus be no right to demand payment for paper for less than £500 sterling, there would not be much trouble, and yet, even so limited, I consider that the paper would be kept from depreciation ; and the authority to reissue would prevent the colony from suffering by a narrowed circulation, while the difference of five stivers in the exchange would amply compensate the colony for the expense of the arrangement, without being oppressive to the community. Now that large sums are required for paying apprenticed labourers for extra time, I doubt whether it may not be found expedient to authorize the extension of the paper money, when demanded by the wants of the colonists ; the money received for it to be invested in Exchequer bills, which would produce an interest for the benefit of the

colony, without being subject to the great fluctuations the British funds are exposed to.

Some years ago an arrangement was made for the payment of public officers at the exchange of *f*14, although their salaries had been fixed in sterling. One of the highest of these officers informed me that his loss by the change has exceeded 10 per cent. annually during the last three years. At present he does not lose, as the exchange is *f*14, but he cannot tell what his income may be next year. Certainty, to public officers, whose expenditure is generally close on their incomes, is desirable. In Berbice, now, with Demerara, forming British Guiana, there is also an issue of paper, and I understand that the Lieutenant-Governor has submitted to government a plan by which a sufficient guarantee-fund may be provided, so that the finances of Demerara and Berbice may be united, and a paper money for British Guiana be substituted for the separate paper of Demerara and Berbice. On the adoption of a general measure for the establishment of the currency of the mother country throughout the colonies, the paper guilders would of course be replaced by paper for sterling money.

Whilst I was in British Guiana the scarcity of small coins compelled the planters to pay for extra labour by tickets, with their signatures, for a guilder, and other small sums, to be exchanged for money when

they reached to a certain amount. This expedient was very unsatisfactory to the apprenticed labourers. With the planters it was a choice of evils; they must either resort to it or do without extra labour.

It may be of importance to ascertain the relative cost of labour in the various colonies*; but the coins differ so much in value, from mutilation, as already explained, and from other causes, that it is almost impossible to say with precision what proportion the wages in one colony bear to those in another: by the introduction of sterling money the difficulty will be greatly diminished.

I trust I have said enough to induce your Lordship to give early attention to this subject; and should any additional information be desired I shall be happy to furnish it, being deeply impressed

* It occurs to me that your Lordship may expect me to mention the machinery in use on the sugar estates of the colonies I have visited. In British Guiana steam-engines may be said to be universal, there not being half a dozen sugar-mills worked by any other power. In Barbadoes, on the contrary, windmills are nearly universal, there being only two or three steam-engines in the island. In Trinidad there are about forty steam-engines, and the number is increasing annually; there are some water-mills, but cattle-mills are most common. In St. Vincent there are only two steam-engines, and very few cattle-mills; wind and water-mills are most used. In Grenada wind and water-mills are also most in use; but there are about twenty steam-engines. In Antigua there are few steam-engines, windmills being nearly universal. In St. Lucia there are two or three steam-engines; wind and water-mills are general. In Jamaica there is to be found every description of power used in the other colonies, but the abridgment of labour by machinery is not carried to the same extent as in British Guiana.

with the importance to the colonies of a general measure.

In most of the colonies there are influential planters who advocate the establishment of Banks. I confess I see many difficulties, but the other colonies might benefit by the example of Demerara, and issue paper founded on investments in England, the interest of which would be a sensible relief in reducing taxes. To such an arrangement I presume the government would not object. In Jamaica there is paper money, some of which bears interest, issued under the authority of the Colonial Legislature, but unsupported by English investments. In Dominica there are also a few (I believe two) thousand dollars of paper money, resting entirely on the security of the island, and therefore, although so trifling in amount, it is often at a discount*. In the other colonies I found no colonial paper-money.

In my observations on the different colonies, I have explained the difficulty of getting rid of old habits, however pernicious, and however obvious the advantages of a change. But the period is now arrived when planters must boldly overcome whatever is bad in the system of conducting their affairs, or their estates will not be worth having. I shall point out one abuse, of a formidable nature, which

* Recently the master of an American vessel obtained a verdict against a store-keeper, who compelled him to take the amount in paper-money. The treasury had no specie to give for it, and therefore he had to sell it at a considerable sacrifice.

has been long tolerated in most of the colonies. A planter opens two accounts with a store-keeper, under the heads Cash account and Produce account. To the latter are charged all the articles furnished to the estate that are to be paid for in the succeeding year in rum or molasses at fixed prices, generally much above the real or probable value. The planter has constantly in his mind this excess of price at which his rum and molasses are to be received, and therefore he is easily reconciled to almost any rate of charge the store-keeper may make for the articles furnished to the estate. On the other hand, the store-keeper has a constant recollection of the extravagant rate he is to allow, and therefore amply indemnifies himself for that, as well as the long credit, in his charges for all supplies. From accounts and calculations shown to me, I believe I am greatly within bounds in saying, that on an average of years the planter by this arrangement loses fully 30 per cent. For a less advantage it would scarcely be an object to a store-keeper to open such accounts. Money is so valuable, and the risk of litigation and bad debts so great in the colonies, that during my stay in some of the islands I knew of instances of articles being currently sold for £22 cash, when the credit price was £35, payable in money at the end of twelve months; and the store-keeper considered the cash-transaction as the more profitable as well as satisfactory to him of the two. The planter would often save fully what I have stated by buying for

cash; and he would be much less likely to buy an article not absolutely necessary, for many things are taken on credit that would be dispensed with if to be paid for on delivery. Planters say it is very easy for an independent man to pay in cash, but how can a person involved in debt do so? It is for the interest of his creditors to afford the necessary facilities for enabling him to do so, otherwise the loss of pursuing the present system will eventually fall on them.

There is another practice, (and in making this remark I disclaim all reference to individuals,) which cannot be considered otherwise than objectionable *in principle*. Many absentee planters appoint store-keepers their attorneys. It is clear that this invests them with conflicting interests. The store-keeper's interest is opposed to the duty of an attorney, the advantage of the former consisting in profuse expenditure, which it is his duty as attorney to control. An attorney, who has no distinct interest from that of a planter, when in want of a considerable quantity of any article, may, by arranging with one or more planters to take a share, purchase a lot or cargo at the wholesale price, and thereby save from thirty to forty per cent. A store-keeper attorney cannot be expected to promote such arrangements. Whilst I was in one of the islands, two attorneys, unconnected with stores, purchased an American cargo at forty-one per cent. under the retail prices. I heard of many instances in the islands of attorneys,

unconnected with stores, having shares of droghers, which gives them an interest opposed to that of the planter. I shall not pursue the subject further than to remark, that the good of the planters, or rather their very existence as such, requires that those they pay for services should not be engaged in any undertaking which can by possibility produce a collision of interests. It must be borne in mind that the British planter has to compete with Foreign planters who reside on and manage their estates, and who have the benefit of the freest competition in reducing the prices of the articles they want, and in obtaining the highest prices for their produce.

I have already remarked that the labouring population of the British colonies in the West Indies would have been further advanced than they are in civilization, had there been more resident proprietors: their absence renders it doubly important that all public officers should show a good example: they are the parties now most looked up to, and therefore I do hope that government will only appoint to official situations those whose domestic arrangements will exhibit such examples. Non-attention to this in past appointments has been a serious drawback to such public officers as have taken their families with them from England.

I cannot conclude my observations without pressing on your Lordship's attention, and through you, on that of his Majesty's government generally, the

strong claim the colonists have to every facility and assistance that can be afforded them in the great experiment now in progress, that it may have a happy termination. It is manifest that should the pecuniary resources of the planter fail him, all hope of the success of the experiment must vanish. To support him it appears to me to be indispensable that some of the restrictions under which he is now suffering should be removed*, and that the colonies should be considered as integral parts of the empire, and the intercourse with them placed

* All Muscovado and clayed British plantation sugar pays the same duty, without any reference to quality, it having been the policy of government to encourage every improvement in the manufacture of the article. By great outlay and care some planters have succeeded in making it as white as refined sugar; this outlay has been rendered useless, by the refusal of government to admit such sugar, except at the prohibitory duty of eight guineas per cwt., assigning as a reason that it might be exported under a drawback greatly exceeding the common duty. The planters do not desire to avail themselves of any such advantage; all they ask is to be admitted to the consumption of the mother country, which it is to be hoped will be conceded to them, subject to such regulations as may be deemed requisite to prevent exportation under a greater drawback than the duty actually paid. A planter in British Guiana has had his sugar returned to him from Liverpool, and although under the King's lock all the time it was there, he has had to pay duty at the rate of eight guineas per cwt. on the drainage or difference between the weight when put into and taken from the warehouse under the King's lock. Now that whites are likely to be employed more extensively than ever has been known before, in the manufacturing department, it is reasonable to suppose that improvements will be more rapid than hitherto, and therefore it is peculiarly important to the colonists that every obstruction to improvement should be removed.

as far as practicable on the footing of a coasting trade. The restrictions most pressing for removal are those which prevent the use of molasses in distilleries and breweries, and the duties which prohibit the rectification of rum. I humbly conceive that the former article ought to be freely admitted to the distilleries and breweries on duty equivalent to that paid on malt, and that the duty on rum ought not to be higher than that on British spirits. I can suggest nothing so likely to promote the philanthropic views of the real friends of the negroes, as the showing as much favour to the productions of the colonies as to those of the mother-country.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's humble servant,

JOHN INNES.

KENSINGTON SQUARE,
21st Sept. 1835.

*To the Right Hon. Lord Glenelg,
Secretary of State for the Colonial Department,
&c. &c.*

THE END.







